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# The emperor's new clothes

Claude Rawson

#### HOWARD ERSKINE-HILL

*The Augustan Idea in English Literature*  
379pp. Edward Arnold. £33.50.  
0 7131 6373 9

In 1978 Howard Weinbrot published a book which argued that Augustus, far from being thought in the eighteenth century or at other times a paragon of political virtue and a model of enlightened cultural patronage, was frequently regarded as a cruel and sexually depraved tyrant whose atrocities resembled those of Tiberius, Caligula and Nero, and whose poets were either sycophants like Virgil and Horace, or driven into exile like Ovid. It was a highly informative book, but less than even-handed in its presentation of evidence: you would not learn from it, as you do from Howard Erskine-Hill's *The Augustan Idea in English Literature*, that when Gilbert Burnet praised Charles II he compared him to Augustus, but when he later attacked him he compared him to Nero.

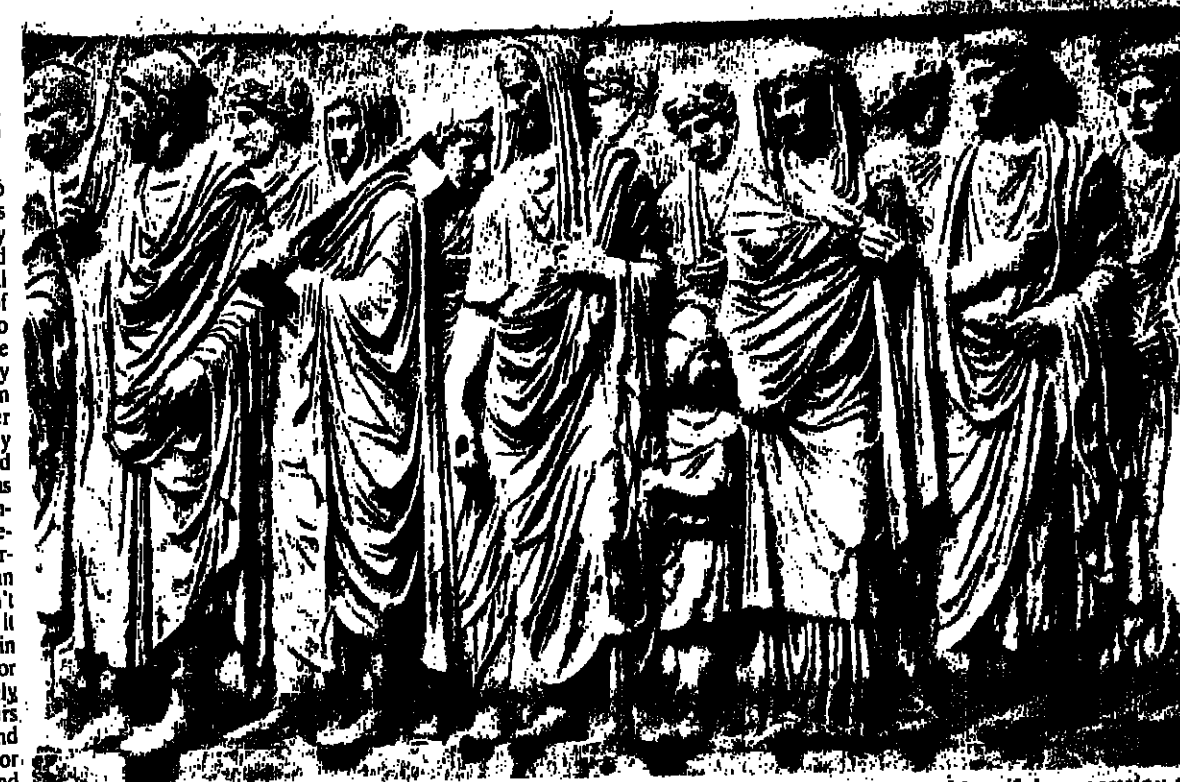
One of Weinbrot's purposes was to discredit the word "Augustan" as it is used of certain eighteenth-century authors, and if anyone ever supposed that these authors had an uncritical admiration for the darker episodes of imperial Roman history, they have no business to think so any longer. But the term has long ceased to rest on any detailed awareness of Augustan Rome, with or without its grimmer aspects. Such awareness would only get in the way, as someone pointed out, we don't think of white togas whenever we use the word "candidate". "Augustan" remains serviceable largely because of its near-meaninglessness. It doesn't even mean "eighteenth-century", which it can't therefore be replaced by. We use it of Dryden, who did not live in that century, and not of Defoe or Richardson, who did. It points loosely to features common to some writers (Dryden, Swift, Pope, Fielding) and not others. Like "Romantic" or "Victorian", it suggests broad categories, not fine distinctions. It should not be abused; but to give it up is to limit discourse by reduction of options.

Nomenclature is a passionate matter. "Augustan" brings in letters to the Editor faster than you can say Doctor Johnson, and as surely. One of the merits of Erskine-Hill's richly elaborate and liberating book is that it is more preoccupied with the history of Augustus's reputation and of the imperial idea than it is with the jargon of the trade. Its theme is not confined to the eighteenth century but pervades our intellectual history since Roman times.

Augustus has always had his detractors. The most distinguished and influential of these were probably Tacitus and Machiavelli, who felt that the Augustan settlement had destroyed the values and freedoms of Republican Rome. An alternative view is that of the Virgilian and Horatian eulogies, which have ensured the transmission of a favourable Augustan myth in later times. A third version is "the Christian providential view" of Origen, Eusebius and Orosius, which derived ultimately from the second chapter of St Luke's gospel. It saw in Augustus' pacification of the world and in the fact that Christ was born within Augustus' reign the fulfilment of a great providential purpose. Out of this Dante and others developed their conception of Augustus as the prophetic ruler of a holy Roman Empire extended in direct succession from the Rome of the Caesars. A syncretic Christianized view of Augustus, and by extension of later rulers who came to be eulogized as new Augustuses, recurs through the ages in a variety of forms: in Jean Bodin on Augustus, in Ariosto on Charles V, in Jonson, Joseph Hall and James Montagu praising James I, in Restoration panegyrics on Charles II, in various rhapsodic poems, including Virgil's Fourth Eclogue, and Isaiah, in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

Elizabeth was thus a good candidate for the more ambiguous kind of Augustan analogy, which questioned

available to those writers who chose nevertheless to see Augustus as a great ruler, a unifier of the empire, a bringer of peace and a patron of the arts. Erskine-Hill says Bodin's *Six Livres de la République* (1576) was the first work by a Renaissance political thinker to give "full weight to the whole range of classical sources and viewpoints on Augustus and to have formed from them a highly complex but... unified account". Lipsius contrived to press Tacitus "into the service of a favourable view". Among poets, Ariosto had earlier shown awareness of a mixed view. One of the most interesting things in this book is Erskine-Hill's rich exposition of the ambiguous play of the Augustan idea in treatments of English rulers from Elizabeth to Charles II (including Cromwell). James spoke in 1603 of Elizabeth as a ruler unparalleled "since



Roman officials, priests and members of the imperial family, including the Emperor Augustus himself, in procession to consecrate the site of the Ara Pacis (July 4, 13 BC), as depicted in relief on its frieze: reproduced from A Handbook of Roman Art: A Survey of the Visual Arts of the Roman World edited by Martin Henig (288pp, with 35 colour and 211 black-and-white illustrations. Oxford: Phaidon. £15, paperback £9.95. 0 7148 2214 0).

the days of the Roman Emperor Augustus". Erskine-Hill describes this as "a public affirmation, by the queen's probable successor, of some of his own political values". It was in fact James who became the first royal object of Augustan compliment on a large scale, and the compliment to Elizabeth masked an uneasy picture.

Elizabeth was usually *Aspasia*, not Augustus, although there is a natural association between the idea of *Aspasia*'s return to earth in a new golden age, and the great regeneration which Virgil's Fourth Eclogue was often taken to have celebrated as the product of Augustus' peace (W.V. Clausen reminds us that when Virgil's poem was written Octavian was not yet Augustus, and Antony was the dominant figure). Virgil's Virgin *Aspasia* was an apt emblem for the Virgin Queen than was Augustus, not least because the Augustan idea of expanding empire did not really match that "defensive rather than expansive" state which was the Fortress England of her reign. It was James who brought peace at home and abroad, and enlarged the nation by uniting the kingdoms of Scotland and England. Elizabeth's unpeaceful reign had not been happy for poets, few of whom experienced Augustus' age as golden, for few then "found support, security or freedom of speech". "Mecenas is veiled in claye/And great Augustus long yoke is dead": the author of these lines, the poet of *Gloriana*, was to die poor, as Jonson and Joseph Hall noted, and his grave in Westminster Abbey had no monument. After Elizabeth's death, Shakespeare, Chapman and Jonson ("our English Horace") were rebuked in Chettle's *England's Mourning Garment* for not praising her memory.

When on the other hand Jonson came to deal with James I, notably in his contributions to *The King's Entertainment* of 1604, he was able to offer a direct and wholehearted

parallel between Augustus and the king, viewed in the full Christianized perspective of Augustus' providential role as peacemaker. James emerges as *Augustus Novus*, in an elaborate orchestration of visual design, Horatian and Virgilian allusion and Jonsonian verse. It was the first time the Augustan (as distinct from the *Aspasia*) parallel had featured in a British royal entry, and Jonson's spectacular use of it seems to have inaugurated the tradition among English poets of writing about their monarchs in Augustan terms. If the tradition was to emerge, as it did, beyond the stage of simple compliment, it needed to accommodate the political and cultural realities of an imperfect world. The most interesting works in this mode are those which carry within them "the subtle blend of independence and

When Charles was losing the Civil War, May was a parliamentarian, and in his *History of the Parliament of England* (1647) he described as a "Tyranny" what he had earlier celebrated as "great Augustus happy Monarchy". In *Tom May's Death* Marvell treats his political changeability with comic contempt. May meets his old master Jonson in Elysium, and is fiercely rebuked. Jonson's sentiments are taken as Marvell's by most commentators, but Erskine-Hill's view is that while Marvell has admiration for the old poet's angry integrity, he is expressing his own properly ambiguous feelings as between Charles and Cromwell. Marvell's "Horatian Ode Upon Cromwell's Return" is closely related in time, in language and in its awareness of Lucan and of May's Lucan, to *Tom May's Death*, and it is suggested that similarly complex sympathies surround Marvell's treatment of May.

The examples of Marvell and even of May illustrate an interesting fact about the "dark side" of the Augustan idea. It not only coexisted with an ultimately pro-Augustan view at a level of coherent political analysis, but might readily enter, as in May's *Continuation*, into poetic celebrations of Augustus. If the combination, at the lowest valuation, seems preferable to the crudest sort of panegyric, there is also a more ambitious point to be made. The discreditable element of Augustus' traditional reputation, so far from being mainly fuel for anti-Augustan sentiments, were themselves a positive strength where panegyric needed to carry a latent reservation or monitory note, or where a high political idealism needed to be checked by recognition of harsher realities. It may be, in particular, that this "dark side" entered creatively into those situations where better poets than May (Marvell, Waller, Dryden) wrote from mixed or fluctuating loyalties, and not always from the most honourable motives, both about Cromwell and about the poet of the *Continuation* (Cromwell) wrote to the great monarch, a panegyric to *My Lord Protector*, but seems to have been cooler about the *Ode on the Death of Harrington*, who thought the Caesars had betrayed liberty and wanted Cromwell to establish a lasting republic.)

Conscious Augustanizing in English literature began with Jonson on James I, not with Dryden on Charles II. By the time of *Aspasia Redux* (1660), the time of *Aspasia* became a new Augustus was nothing new. Of the many literary welcomes to Charles, it seems that only five compared him to Augustus: Charles was more often compared to David, a comparison which in *Abraham and Achitophel* was later to produce a finer poetic expression than any Augustan analogy. (Charles came also to be imagined as resembling Antioch rather than Augustus, a king of pleasure rather than of policy; in a very fine earlier chapter on "Shakespeare and the Emperors", Erskine-Hill examines the Antony-Augustus opposition, which was traditional.)

It was some time after the Restoration that "Augustan" began to be used of specific periods of English culture, and in a mainly literary rather than political sense. In 1690, Atterbury (probably), praising Waller, wondered "whether in Charles II's reign English did not come to its full perfection; and whether it has not had its Augustan age as well as the Latin". Erskine-Hill makes much of this statement, citing it repeatedly, and protesting a little too much that it refers to more than linguistic refinement (Weinbrot, by contrast, doesn't mention it at all). The praise of Waller as the first of the "classical" calls to mind Boileau's "Rafin Malherbe vint", and might suggest a wider emphasis. Erskine-Hill surprisingly does not mention this. Waller had become the English equivalent for that liberating surge of "refinement", that poetic revival through correctness, which Boileau had credited to Malherbe. When in 1683 Dryden supplied the corresponding English poets for Soame's

Tom May's progress was unedifying.



translation of the *Art Poétique*, Malherbe became Walter.

Waller came last, but was the first whose Art was Weight and Measure did to Verse impart.

Nevertheless, Atterbury's Preface is remarkably specific in its linguistic emphasis, and for less "narrow" conceptions of an English Augustan age one must turn elsewhere: to Oldmixon and Bevil Higgons for Charles II's reign, to Prior and Rowe and Joseph Warton for William's and Anne's. Warton defines "Augustan Age" as the time "when the arts and polite literature, were at their height in this nation". He and Hume thought it "excessively false", "preposterous", to speak thus of Charles's reign, perhaps echoing Swift, who said it was "reckoned, although very absurdly, our Augustan age".

Swift may be glancing back to Atterbury. Both have (rather-disimilar) Epicurean allusions, and Swift spoke elsewhere of Charles's reign as a time when the language was corrupted. Swift does not deny the first Augustan Age, though his picture of it is downbeat, and he elsewhere took a dim view of Augustus himself. But he had a noble idea of Augustus's poets. In "Of Meant and Great Figures Made by Several Persons", a kind of prose adumbration of Yeats's "Beautiful, Lofty Things", Swift lists "Virgil, when at Rome the whole Audience rose up, out of Veneration, as he entered the Theatre". The credit is Virgil's, but it rubs off on his public and his age, very unlike the present. So also the noble figure of Virgil shows up the ludicrously pretentious Dryden in the *Battle of the Books*. Swift himself cultivated Horatian loyalties. If the Horatian Pope adopted a Juvenalian voice, the supposedly Juvenalian Swift of *saeva Indignatio* always refused the "lofty Stile", preferring Horace to Juvenal and citing him many times more often.

Swift gets short treatment from Erskine-Hill (his *On Poetry* A *Rhapsody* an important companion-piece to Pope's *Epistle to Augustus*, is not discussed, for example). He offers a striking example of nasty historical realities being distinguished from great poetic achievements. Others made the distinction less starkly, by emphasizing or extolling the admired poets more than the dubious monarch. A parallel strategy sometimes appears, in discussions of epic, where an adoration for great poems coexists with uneasiness about the cruelties of battle celebrated within them. Achilles was described in the *Spectator* as "Morally Vicious, and only Poetically Good". Alternatively, heroic discards might be shifted away from epic heroes (Achilles, Aeneas) towards historical conquerors (Alexander, Caesar), as in Fielding's *Jonathan Wild*. In one place he describes the blood as *idiotus Achillis* to Wild's Aeneas, and corrects himself by adding "for Walter", the Hephæstion of our Alexander. Epic heroes and historical villains resembled each other in ways which were uneasily and ambiguously recognized.

Thomas Blackwell, whose *Enquiry into the Life and Writings of Homer* (1735) expressed the wish "That we may never be a proper Subject of an Heroic Poem", also wrote some

*Memoirs of the Court of Augustus* (1753-1763). This provided an "influential argument" for detaching "a literary Augustan Age" from Augustus himself, whom Blackwell on balance admired, and whose career he divided into three phases: patriot-republican, then tyrant-triumvir, then father of his people. Blackwell's point about the poets was that they were "not formed under Augustus" . . . [but] under the Common-Wealth, during the high struggles for Liberty". Virgil and Augustus were not "country Poets under Augustus; no more than Milton, Waller and Cowley were under Charles II". The argument reappears in Gibbon and others. It is an attempt to give a historical basis for distinctions which were necessary to the survival of a myth, at a time when, as it happens, most historians (including Gibbon) were hostile to Augustus. You could evidently have an Augustan age, ancient or modern, even if you repudiated its ruler.

The outspoken, independent Horace was not a recent invention, however, and Erskine-Hill powerfully argues that this is the Horace of Pope's *Imitations*. The first of the series, the famous *Satires*, II, was urged upon him by Bolingbroke, whose view of Augustus was the Tacitean one and whose attacks on the English Augustus, alias George II, and his Whig henchmen exploited the negative analogy. Erskine-Hill observes that Bolingbroke "did not think Horace, by this token, a syncretic court poet", or he would scarcely have urged Pope to adopt a Horatian persona, least of all from "this poem of Horace, which happens to focus on the relation of poet and prince". Erskine-Hill writes well on Pope's Horatian (or "Horatian-Lucretian") self-image, "plain / As downright Shipper, or as old *Montagne*", but oddly overlooks the fact that Pope's statement a few lines later, "Forces call me Whig, and Whigs a Tory", itself derives more closely from Montaigne's "au Gibelin, j'estois Guephe, au Guephe, j'estois Guephe" (Essays, III, xii) than from the corresponding lines of Horace. This omission leads (I think) to a slightly misleading account of the "Montaigne's Voice in the passage". But Pope's free-speaking Horace, as expounded here, was at least as traditional as his opposite, the urbane syncretist described by the Friend in the *Epilogue to the Satires*, in a portrayal of which Erskine-Hill gives a particularly subtle account.

There was a strand in eighteenth-century thought, from Berkeley to Horace Walpole, that expected a new Augustan age to arise in America or in some other new world. In 1792 Pitt imagined a Roman senator contemplating the ancient Britons, "little superior . . . to the rude inhabitants of the coast of Guinea". Britain would then have seemed as unlikely to "rise to civilization" as Africa did in 1792. Pitt's speech was quoted by Stanley in 1892 and thence may have found its way into the opening of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, which it resembles. Erskine-Hill passes, in his suggestive *Epilogue*, on this unwritten chapter of the Augustan idea, with his view of the Conrad's agent of Empire "bearing the sword, and often the torch" into the dark places of the earth. Civilization

was, and had to be, paid for by blood and servitude, and the evil deeds of Augustus were part of that price, just as the vicious conquerors of later times brought light (and even, in a phrase from *Lord Jim*, "electric light") into the heart of darkness.

The Kurtz of *Heart of Darkness*, to the making of whom "all Europe had contributed", is not only an instrument of that imperial enterprise of the nineteenth century which Conrad compares with the Roman original. He became, as a monarch of the bush, the embodiment of a kind of absolute personal power which made possible a total gratification of all his desires. This had the lineaments of a type of "Caesarism" which fascinated Sade, Flaubert, Wilde and Artaud, and against which Max Nordau fulminated as a sign of degeneration. Kurtz's Caesarian features include tyranny, mass slaughter, the satisfaction of unbridled and "unspeakable" lusts, and an assumption of godlike status (Flaubert said Augustus "se fait appeler Dieu par ses poètes").

This is a parallel not glimpsed in Erskine-Hill's concluding panorama. But it involves an essential part of the history of the "Augustan idea". The dark side of Augustus's reputation came from earliest times to have lusts with which his more notorious successors were more particularly identified. But the image of unbridled self-indulgence was balanced by the reputation for prudence which his people say (according to Suetonius) that even his adulteries had political rather than passionate motives. De Quincey said that "the cruelties of Augustus were perhaps equal in atrocity to any which are recorded", though "they were not prompted by a ferocious nature, but by calculating policy".

It would be interesting to know how this affected the reputation of Augustus among those later writers, from Sade to Artaud and after, who admired rather than repudiated the post-Augustan Emperors as types of total self-realization in cruelty. Was he admired and admired for his cruelty?

Erskine-Hill's account of Augustus is here provided by Michael Reed's *Georgian Triumph*. Lucidly written, pleasantly illustrated and well researched, it is aimed at the intelligent general reader, who is treated with proper respect. A welcome feature of this study is its attention to Scottish and Welsh, as well as to English history. The focus is a recreation of the ambience of Georgian society in its built environment. That was, incidentally, a very characteristic eighteenth-century preoccupation. The interplay between geographical form and human endeavour is thereby highlighted. Indeed, the opening chapter, which begins with the accession of George I in 1714, harkens back to the Ice Age to recapitulate some of the basic geological history of the British Isles. Reed then returns to the major features of eighteenth-century society, with a synoptic view both of the countryside, and of the nature of power structures in government, church and society.

Change in rural Britain is given due weight, and balanced against evidence

# The built environment

Penelope J. Corfield

MICHAEL REED

The Georgian Triumph 1700-1830  
240pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul.  
£12.50.  
0 7100 9414 0

The eighteenth century has not always had a good press. The self-styled "Augustan Age", the era of "Enlightenment", Gibbon's "Age of Science and Philosophy" or Paine's "Age of Reason", could well be criticized on grounds of complacency. To successor generations, it also lacked the challenge posed by novelty or remoteness: it was not Gothic or Greek. By the end of the nineteenth century, it could be rejected by some as not only familiar and smug, but even dreary. Burne-Jones, explaining that he had not studied the writings of Horace Walpole, who "lived in a horrid set of years and people", was sharply dismissive: "All the century through is like a wet Saturday afternoon to me and the word 'eighteenth-century' sinks me down into despair."

Things have changed. Eighteenth-century studies are in productive ferment. An interesting convergence of reassessments is taking place: fresh attention is focusing upon its social and labour history, its family and demographic history, its legal and intellectual history and its political and cultural history in the broadest sense. Even the timeless vision of a hierarchical, land-owning society, motivated by status and place rather than by ideology, issues or class, which lay at the heart of Namier's seminal interpretation of the mid-eighteenth century, is now under critical scrutiny. In this historical application at least, the period does not, therefore, lend itself to easy generalization.

An introduction to its complexities is here provided by Michael Reed's *Georgian Triumph*. Lucidly written, pleasantly illustrated and well researched, it is aimed at the intelligent general reader, who is treated with proper respect. A welcome feature of this study is its attention to Scottish and Welsh, as well as to English history. The focus is a recreation of the ambience of Georgian society in its built environment. That was, incidentally, a very characteristic eighteenth-century preoccupation. The interplay between geographical form and human endeavour is thereby highlighted. Indeed, the opening chapter, which begins with the accession of George I in 1714, harkens back to the Ice Age to recapitulate some of the basic geological history of the British Isles. Reed then returns to the major features of eighteenth-century society, with a synoptic view both of the countryside, and of the nature of power structures in government, church and society.

Change in rural Britain is given due weight, and balanced against evidence

for continuing traditionalism within the constraints of local economy and geography. The diffusion of building styles and landscaping projects were important indicators of economic and social innovation. In their sheer enthusiasm and eclecticism, eighteenth-century country houses bore witness to affluence and a confident pillaging of past styles. The Shelleys' residence at Castle Goring in Sussex, completed in 1798, was an elaborate hybrid, with classical south (in brick), decorated with portico and ionic pilasters, and Gothic north facade (in flint) with turrets and battlements. Landscaping on a grand scale also demonstrated conscious concern for managing the environment. Cowper's poem "Capability Brown commemorated as 'the omnipotent magician', to whom 'woods vanish, hills subside, and valleys rise'".

Similarly, in its urban, industrial and transport history, there were signs of tensions between change and continuity. The building and rebuilding of townscape took place on a sometimes magnificent scale, as there were important innovations in the formalization of public space, with squares, gardens, parks, promenades. London, Bath and Edinburgh were examples of fashions that were echoed in smaller towns across the country. But improvements in street cleaning, sanitation, health services and housing were patchy in their application.

Other developments fostered a sense of change through conscious search for the application of power production. Boulton's Soho factory at Handsworth Heath, Birmingham, finished c. 1765 and shown here in an illustration from 1800, was considered palatial in appearance. Reed points to the impact of transport improvements in promoting mobility of goods, people, news and ideas. In consequence, there was a growing pluralism and diversity within English society. Visually, that was indicated by an increasing secularization of a landscape, especially in the towns, though there was in fact a considerable amount of church-building in these years. Visually and socially, however, the dominance of ecclesiastical institutions was much eclipsed by those of secular society, whether in the form of town halls, theatres, assembly rooms, racetracks, grandiose market buildings, schools, hospitals, prisons, or, later, power stations. The Saltford Gas Works at Worsley (1822), shown here in a 1967 photograph, constituted an urban landscape in its own right, with a stately mansion facade, complete with Gothic tracery in the windows.

Industrial Revolution and the ascendancy of the landed gentry co-existed in eighteenth-century Britain. Therein lies the analytical challenge posed by the period. "How a consistent age?" asked Horace Walpole, rhetorically, in 1784. Walpole, deciding on the whole in the negative. Yet Saturday afternoons may recur; the eighteenth century is not, however, dreary.

Dublin as "high-pitched" and it is not true that "ground-floor windows were always the largest": that distinction is reserved for the piano noble. In 1797, Molesworth Street did not involve an eighteenth-century house, but rather an important mid-nineteenth-century school for Benjamin Ward. The author, for whom the banks and the insurance companies are, rightly, the villains of the piece, tells us that the grandest Dublin architecture is "fundamentally a neo-Georgian pastiche as handsome as the best of both worlds". I do not doubt that the author is right. But it is not an official document, and therefore does not bear the imprimatur of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. Yet the book has become a seasoned traveller. The Crown has left India, but Erskine May is staying on: this twentieth edition will be taking up residence in the customary place of honour in the Lok Sabha. It will be

# Treating like with like

David Pannick

WARWICK MCKEAN

Equality and Discrimination under International Law  
333pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press.  
£30.  
0 19 825311 7

ANDREW Z. DRZEMCZEWSKI

European Human Rights Convention in Domestic Law: A Comparative Study  
372p. Oxford: Clarendon Press. £30.  
0 19 825396 6

Equality is the goal of socialists. It is a topic of debate among liberals and, too often, the subject of ridicule among conservatives. The denial of equal rights has, according to Tom Paine, "been the cause of all the disturbances, insurrections, and civil wars that ever happened". What, then, does the provocative concept of equality mean and to what extent do we recognize it as a fundamental principle of law?

The proclamation in the American Declaration of Independence that "it is self-evident . . . that all men are created equal" cannot mean that we all have equal intelligence, strength or moral character. Such a proposition is untenable. What we do have is an equal right to respect as human beings in the distribution of benefits and detriments, a right to be treated like others to the extent that we share their characteristics. Equality requires that different treatment is not to be accorded unless there are relevant and valid reasons for distinguishing between persons. Such a principle is fundamental to rationality, as well as to equality. But it begs the question of what constitute relevant and valid reasons for particular purposes so as to justify disparate treatment. That question can only be answered by reference to our conceptions of justice and fairness.

If equality is the treating of like with like, discrimination is the failure to accord such equal treatment. In ordinary usage, "to discriminate" may mean "to differentiate". But in legal contexts, it is a pejorative term, meaning "to distinguish on

unreasonable or unfair grounds, to fail to treat like with like. We have come to recognize that certain grounds of difference, for example sex or race (or, in some legal systems, sexual orientation, age or physical handicap), are not relevant to the distribution of particular benefits. Unequal treatment on these grounds has, therefore, been prohibited. The ambiguities of the concept of equality are the subject of debate amongst philosophers. But in those legal systems which guarantee equality as a fundamental right, judges must decide what equality requires in concrete cases. Where laws require "equality" or "equal protection" courts do not confine themselves to strict scrutiny of different treatment on invidious grounds, such as race or sex. They also seek to ensure that no State action treats like unlike (or unlike alike) on any unreasonable ground. An explanation will be required from a State to establish that a difference of treatment is reasonable. The essence of equality, as identified by Bernard Williams, is thus protected by the constitutional law of many nations: for any difference in treatment a sufficient reason must be given.

All laws differentiate between persons. They classify and generalize by rules, subjecting defined classes to specific treatment. That is the merit of law compared with unfettered discretion. The legal principle of equality ensures that the distinction inherent in law are not drawn in an arbitrary manner. The obligation to give equal treatment is therefore fundamental to law.

Warwick McKean clearly and accurately explains these basic propositions. He construes his brief in broad terms so as to cover the interpretation of the equal protection clauses of the US and Indian constitutions (but not the similar clauses guaranteeing equality in Ireland, Cyprus and Canada). He describes the origins of equality principles in general international law. From treaty guarantees, international law moved, after the Second World War, to a more general concern for fundamental rights, including equality. Why, though, did international law remain so unconcerned with fundamental freedoms for all until so

late in its development, despite the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and the US Bill of Rights in the eighteenth century?

McKean methodically and helpfully describes the content of the UN Conventions and Declarations on such topics as genocide, apartheid, discrimination in employment and education, racial discrimination, equal rights for women. As he observes, a healthy corpus of law has been established. All those who seek to argue about equality in political or other debate should be aware of the scope of this material. McKean's book is a useful guide. He is unfairly critical of those who drafted many of the UN documents. Their failure adequately to define what they mean by equality or discrimination mirrors, in this respect, municipal law analogies, both constitutional and statutory. The problems of securing agreement on a text are formidable. A declaration and convention on religious intolerance were, says McKean, requested by the UN General Assembly in 1962. By 1979, a Sub-Commission had adopted only the title and preamble of a draft declaration.

The validity of affirmative action in international law is rightly emphasized by McKean. Special measures to assist disadvantaged groups (even if defined by race or colour) is a furtherance of equality, not a denial of it. The term "positive discrimination" is a misnomer, since the differentiation is not thought to be unreasonable or unfair. Disadvantaged groups are dissimilar to the majority in relevant respects, lacking the opportunities and rewards of others. Hence different, more favourable treatment of those groups is acceptable to the extent that it is temporary, is aimed at rectifying their disadvantages and is not imposed contrary to their wishes. Those politicians who frown on affirmative action (and who are responsible for the very narrow provisions of this type in the British Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and Race Relations Act 1976) should note that international law (and the municipal law of the US and India) finds such measures consistent with equality. If we accept this in international law, why do we reject it in our domestic law?

McKean concentrates on sub-

stantive legal norms to the virtual exclusion of methods of enforcing those principles. This is no doubt, because international law has, traditionally, concerned itself with relationships between States, not the rights of individuals against their own State. The development of fundamental rights has, hitherto, not resulted in the creation of adequate enforcement machinery by which an aggrieved individual can bring a claim. This gives McKean's book a slightly arid flavour. It is difficult to become excited by the conclusion that non-discrimination is a general legal principle when one knows that a violation of the norm in so many parts of the world is not justifiable, let alone likely to be rectified by reference to international law.

As McKean notes, the European Convention on Human Rights offers the most effective system of enforcing individual rights of all international law guarantees. The fundamental freedoms protected by the Convention, and its Protocols, can be the subject of individual petition to the European Commission on Human Rights against those States which have accepted such a right of petition. The main defects of the procedure are the inordinate delay, the absence of an appeal against findings by the Commission, and the discretion of the Commission and the respondent government as to whether to bring the case before the European Court of Human Rights.

The procedural defects of the Convention give vital relevance to Andrew Z. Drzemczewski's study of the impact of the convention in the domestic law of those States party to it. Of the twenty-one States which have ratified the Convention, only seven, including the United Kingdom, have

failed to incorporate it into domestic law. This is especially unfortunate in the case of the UK because we have no other entrenched protection of fundamental freedoms against State action. British courts will ensure that where domestic law is ambiguous it is, so far as possible, interpreted and applied consistently with our treaty obligations, including the Convention.

Drzemczewski's scholarly study of the performance of the other States party to the Convention suffers a certain lack of perspective. Unless one assesses the other guarantees of fundamental rights written into the domestic law of those States, one cannot fully determine the impact and the relevance of the Convention. He discusses the impact of the Convention on legal relations between individuals. This discussion would, I think, benefit from analysis of the analogous problem of State action in US constitutional law. He proposes that domestic courts should have the power to refer cases to the European Court of Human Rights. That would require radical, and desirable, changes in the existing Convention procedure. He also explains the potential for incorporation of the Convention into EEC law. But even the most ardent supporter of the European ideal might have difficulty supporting his statement that in the UK "the application of Community law by domestic courts appears to raise no major problems". Tell that to the Employment Appeal Tribunal which has heroically struggled to apply Community law on sex discrimination and equal pay. These Community law rights are, at least in part, directly enforceable in domestic courts. The European Convention (including Article 14 which guarantees equality in the enjoyment of the protected rights) is not. In this respect, like is not treated with like; some are more equal than others.

## August Books

### Fiction

#### BODIES AND SOULS

Nancy Thayer

The author of *Stepping and Three Women at the Water's Edge* uses her unique blend of insight and compassion to delve into the most private recesses of people's hearts and to explore the different types of love. £8.95

#### THE IVORY SWING

Janette Turner Hospital

An exotic and disturbing portrait of contemporary India, in which a Canadian couple are caught in personal and cultural conflict in the lush and volatile climate of southern India. £7.95

#### THE GATES OF MIDNIGHT

Jessica Stirling

The third in the trilogy comprising *The Deep Well at Noon* and *The Blue Evening Gown*, carries the recently widowed Holly Beckman and her family into the dark years of the Second World War. £8.95

### Non-Fiction

#### THE BEACH OF MORNING

A Walk in West Africa

Stephen Pern

From the papyrus-choked shores of elusive Lake Chad, the author and his Nigerian companion wander south on a 600-mile walk along tracks linking remote villages until they reach the Mandara Mountains. Illustrated. £9.95

### DRUM

An African Adventure - And Afterwards

Anthony Sampson

A new edition of his first book written thirty years ago gives an enthralling and funny account of his experience as a journalist in Johannesburg on the black magazine *Drum*. £6.95

#### STOPPING-TRAIN BRITAIN

A Railway Odyssey

Alexander Frater

Photographs by Alain le Garsmeur

A celebration of remote and beautiful corners of the British Isles - the author travels ten of the most romantic and exciting railway lines, talking to passengers and staff, and recounts the memorable characters associated with each line and the men who conceived and built it. Colour and black and white photographs. £10.95

Hodder & Stoughton

# The levellers' threat

Maurice Craig

KEVIN CORRIGAN KEARNS  
Georgian Dublin: Ireland's Impassioned Architectural Heritage  
244pp. Newton Abbott: David and Charles. £12.95.  
0 7155 8440 6

Dublin occupies much the same position in the Irish psyche as Constantinople in the Turkish. (It even has, like Constantinople, two names both in the same language.) It has been lost over from an ancient regime and is mostly now occupied by people who are countrymen by origin and have little appreciation of urban life and how it should be lived. Worse still, we have caught the English disease (of Romantic origin) of thinking towns to be places to be got out of as quickly as possible by those who can afford to do so.

As Kevin Corrigan Kearns points out, the fabric of inner Dublin survived much longer than that of any comparable city, for a combination of reasons which, during the past twenty years, have ceased to operate. The principal agent in its destruction has been the frantic pace of economic expansion since about 1965. Planning structures were and are sketchy and ineffective, leaving procedures virtually non-existent. The northern half of the city, which had become an enclave, while the southern half provided a series of high-quality environments which attracted the covetous eye of developers, intent on snatching the branch on which they sat. There were, several well-publicized, rowdy, and bigger (than its predecessor) Kildare Street, Lower Fitzwilliam Street, Home Street. The pass was sold by people who should have known better.

All this Professor Kearns chronicles and he chronicles also the rise of the

antibodies which nearly always form in such a situation. In particular he notes that whereas in 1962 the architectural students marched about with banners proclaiming that "Dublin must not be a museum", by 1969 they were building in order to forestall their destruction. Eighteen years later the forces of conservation are still stronger, but battles are still being lost, as they are in other towns and in other countries.

The focus of *Georgian Dublin* is exclusively on "domestic" buildings, houses which either are or have been privately occupied. Apart from a brief mention of the Custom House and a GPO, the reader gets no hint of the Irish government's record in the restoration of the Four Courts, the other war-damaged buildings, the work of the Marino Casino still going on, the generous allocations to Trinity College for its historic buildings, the

continuing restorations at Dublin Castle, and the great undertaking now nearing completion at the Royal Hospital, Kildare. Nor are we told about the successful adaptation of the Blue Coat School by the Incorporated Law Society, or the very radical restoration of the Old Parliament House recently completed by the Bank of Ireland. So the picture is somewhat one-sided.

The book is also rather wordy; it could with advantage have been half the length. The word "Georgian" appears far too often. In fourteen consecutive pages chosen at random I find forty-nine times. "Nobody's" is not a very useful word at the best of times, and in Ireland it hangs like a millstone around the neck of anyone trying to think intelligently about architecture.

Many matters of detail are amiss. It is misleading to speak of the roofs of

Dublin as "high-pitched" and it is not true that "ground-floor windows were always the largest": that distinction is reserved for the piano noble. In 1797, Molesworth Street did not involve an eighteenth-century house, but rather an important mid-nineteenth-century school for Benjamin Ward. The author, for whom the banks and the insurance companies are, rightly, the villains of the piece, tells us that the grandest Dublin architecture is "fundamentally a neo-Georgian pastiche as handsome as the best of both worlds". I do not doubt that the author is right. But it is not an official document, and therefore does not bear the imprimatur of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. Yet the book has become a seasoned traveller. The Crown has left India, but Erskine May is staying on: this twentieth edition will be taking up residence in the customary place of honour in the Lok Sabha. It will be



# The occupiers and the occupied

Eugen Weber

André Halimi

*La délation sous l'Occupation*  
312pp. Paris: Moreau. 79fr.  
25209 005 8

Richard Cobb

*French and Germans, Germans and French: A personal interpretation of France under two occupations*

188pp. University Press of New England (available in the UK through International Book Distributors). £10.95.  
0 87451 225 5

In 1942, to reward the population of Dieppe for their "correct" attitude during the Allied raid on the town, the Germans decided to release the French prisoners from the area whom they held in their camps. The news set off a trickle of visits to the local Kommandantur, from Dieppeois eager to denounce their husbands' Communist or other affiliations, real or imagined, in order to avoid homecomings that might trouble the alternative arrangements they had made in their absence.

This is not a story that André Halimi tells; but he does provide a long record of equally nauseating denunciations. During the years 1940-44, we are told that the French sent between 3 and 5 million prison-pen letters, many of them signed (a few are reproduced here in a nineteen-page appendix), to the French or German authorities, informing against Jews, masons, Gaullists, defeatists, anglophiles, résistants, or black marketeers. They accused neighbours, workmates, employers, lovers and relatives. Widows peached on husbands, mothers on sons, siblings on each other, administrators on administrators, concierges on locataires, parishioners on curés, lawyers, doctors, pharmacists and shopkeepers on competitors.

They sought revenge, vented envy or spite, acted on principle, or pursued gain—rewards could range from a few hundred francs to ten thousand or more. Some tried to recapture or punish an errant husband. Some hoped for an apartment, or for a business boost. Some, presumably enjoyed the exhilaration of power, or the fun of inflicting pain. Unfortunately, Halimi makes no attempt to analyse motives, let alone local traditions (denunciations and *lettres anonymes* seem to have spread in many places along with literacy). Clouzot's film *Le Corbeau* is never mentioned, nor are the explosive tensions of French family life. Some *délateurs*, of course, simply did their job as agents, informers, or miliciens. Among these professionals one must not forget the journalists who denounced Jews, alleged résistants and others they disliked. In articles guaranteed to bring a visit from the Milice, if not from the Gestapo, "ils n'en mouraient pas tous, mais tous étaient frappés." And the Resistance soon learned to respond in kind, in its publications and, more effectively, its London broadcasts.

Though the media were more visible and audible, while the telephone in Paris was scarce, *underdeveloped* mass media, some letters were deliberately suppressed, by the sympathetic postmen, and some ignored by disgusted Germans, especially when unsigned. But most denunciations produced action that could lead to arrest, deportation, eventually death. They were meant to do so—as with the wife of a Resistance leader, who denounced him on condition that he should not survive. Halimi's final chapter lists about 150 post-war trials out of the 125,000 cases investigated after the liberation, including two of Jews, one of whom worked for the Gestapo, the other for Darlan's Milice.

This is not a very good book on an unsavory subject. It does not indicate its basic sources, and gives the impression of having been put together largely with scissors and paste. It also errs in suggesting that Jews in the Unoccupied Zone wore the yellow star: they did not, but their identity

papers, marked JEW, were harder to discard than a piece of cloth. *La Délation* does, however, provide an extended footnote to Michael Marrus and Robert Paxton's book on *Vichy France and the Jews*, confirming the resentment evoked by Jewish refugees visible in hotels and cafés, apparently driving up rents and prices, inciting the black market by their lack of ration-cards, dallying away their time (what else were they to do?), spending money freely (because forced to do so).

In this connection, Cavanua's autobiographical *Les fusillés* notes that in 1943 ordinary people envied the fate of Jews and political prisoners "qui, pensions-nous, se prélassaient à ne rien foutre dans leurs camps de concentration avec plantes vertes et terrains de golf". Refugees, or evacuees, are *dénoncés* almost by definition, targets of resentment not only as strangers but also as idlers, or else as unwanted competitors in the market for employment or goods. Exceptional circumstances offered exceptional opportunities to bare vexation and spite.

It would be interesting to know how French behaviour in this respect compared with that of other occupied peoples and, indeed, with that of Germans or Russians in the face of their own régimes. Was civic spirit particularly weak in France, was the odour of anarchy, so strong in 1940, exceptionally potent? Or, on the contrary, was self-deception encouraged by civic appeals, so that, after 1944 as before it, high principles could accommodate base ends and baser means? Halimi reminds us that, in China (as in Iran) today, délation is regarded as a civic obligation. He does not point out that, in 1940-42 at least, many French could have regarded it in a similar light. After all, denouncing enemies of the nation a civic duty, at least since the Terror, except perhaps in those particular communities—Protestant in the Cévennes, White around Cholet—where discretion and survival have long gone hand in hand. Historical tradition informs social attitudes. Then, again, terms like *délation* (*snitching*) or *dénonciation* (*snitching*) do not turn comfortably into English, and trip awkwardly once translated. Does that suggest a culture more receptive to the tale-bearer and the sneak than that of the Anglo-Saxons? Or was the impotent rage born of defeat and despair especially acute in France, and were displacement activities focused on exposed, vulnerable targets—particularly widespread? Did crisis exacerbate existing velleities, mistrust and envy, malice and spite, or merely reveal them?

Some of the questions Halimi does not raise and others that his narrower focus does not touch, are brought up in Richard Cobb's presentation of relations between *occupants* and *occupied*, not only in 1940-45, but in 1914-18 as well—a period which has received next to no attention. The familiarity born of constant rubbing against each other, of shared conditions of simple human (and sexual) relationships, tends to be forgotten. Cobb recaptures it with compassion and sympathy in a chapter on the department of the Nord. He imagines how the German soldiers, who arrived in 1940, saw the situation of the civilians (fourteen of the twenty-one SS men finally tried at Bordeaux in 1953 for the massacres of Oradour, were from the north-eastern regions, doubtfully fleeing through two German occupations, and their estranged children were often treated with suspicion and known as *les boches du nord*).

Despite such treatment, not entirely exceptional in a country much more fragmented than it likes to admit, and much given to casting suspicion on natives of one province or another, the north-east remained almost impervious to Vichy influence. The may have been because the old hearted *chefs de famille* (or *chefs de famille*) was more in evidence there than the very first, or because the

German military authorities, with possible annexation in mind, kept Vichy's representatives powerless and Vichy propaganda muted. It may have been due to the region's long-standing anglophile traditions (Cobb reminds us that Roubaix was the second French town after Le Havre, to found a soccer club, introduced in 1877 by two Yorkshire textile engineers). The fact is that, to the north-easters, both war and occupation were far more real—and not just because de Gaulle was a Lillois and his wife a Calaisienne, for, after all, Pétain was also an *enfant du pays*. It was simply that, as Cobb points out, patriotism came easily to a frontier region always the first to experience the effects of war and invasion. For north-easters, as for Lorrainers, the practical reality and its moral concomitants were much clearer than for Auvergnons or Languedociens.

The second German occupation, of course, is hardly unexplored. But, again, Cobb directs attention to topics normally wrapped in decent obscurity, like the role of the police—and one should add, of the *gendarmes*—a subject that has also been treated like a Victorian family secret, known to all about which mum's the word. In films about the liberation of Paris, the last-minute somersault of the law's guardians, what Cobb calls "the carefully staged police mutiny of August 1944", is treated as the heroic centrepiece of events. Again, Cavanua places it in better perspective when he describes the riotous reaction of prisoners, *déportés* and STO workers, repatriated from Germany, parked in the giant Gaumont-Palace, and treated to a film in which the men in blue who

had turned most of them over to the liberation "l'Union des Salopes" (l'Union des salopards). "A social history of the French police is crying out to be written, but it will have to wait a while."

Thanks in part to Henri Amouroux and Henri Michel, we know more about that collaboration of which often come down to "a business" relationship profitable to both parties—not just in industry, the black market, on the pedestrian front or on the fringes of the criminal world, but in un-avoidably numerous affairs among the members of the SS (Chénégue Division for whom Hitler was "le Grand Jule"), but he might have said more about the two million French prisoners in Germany, many of whom found a cushy billet, or even a home on a farm, and the thousands of STO volunteers, who found a job that paid in German factories, when work and *sons* at home were hard to come by.

To Cobb, for whom marginality is central and politically trivial concerns play the major role, as they do in life, occupier and occupied adjusted to each other where they had to, and largely ignored each other over great stretches of France where, almost until the end, the German presence remained unobtrusive. He reminds us of the normality of much everyday life; of the relief so many shared, and on which Vichy harped, that the youth of France could live at home—at least till 1943—

## In the dropping zone

Neil Cameron

Norman Longmate

*The Bombers: The RAF Offensive against Germany, 1939-1945*  
416pp. Hutchinson. £12.95.  
0 09 151580 7

Bomber Command's assault on Europe will continue to be discussed and criticized by historians for the foreseeable future. It was a historic episode. Forty years and more after the 1,000-bomber raid on Cologne it is easy to sit back and criticize the success or otherwise of such operations. What is missing from the work of most military historians, however, is the factor of wartime confusion and the tensions and pressures under which politicians and military commanders had to work and make decisions. There was also the demand of the British public for revenge attacks, or at least for some sort of reprisal for the aggression which Germany had inflicted on Europe.

Government policy in the 1930s had starved the armed forces of the degree of financial support needed to equip them to face up to the growing strength of Germany. It is interesting to speculate whether Hitler would have been deterred if this support had been available, so that forces of comparable size and efficiency to his own had been at his disposal.

There were other important effects too. Speer pointed to the fact that the bombing of factories in Germany deprived the German army on all fronts of 50 per cent of its anti-tank guns, and those guns which also had an anti-aircraft capability were dispersed to defend a wide variety of targets within Germany itself. Some of these guns were deployed away from full combat duties while hundreds of thousands of skilled tradesmen were not called up because they were required to repair bomb damage. Speer goes on to suggest that if this manpower and capability had been released for, say, the Russian front, the result of the war could have been very different.

Another major effect achieved by the bombing assault by British and American air forces, and one often overlooked by historians, was the superiority over Europe and the seas around the Continent. Goering was compelled to react defensively and Luftwaffe, becoming completely unbalanced as the war developed, German factories were driven more and more into manufacturing aircraft

for defence and even the first jet and rocket aircraft were deployed in defence, on the Führer's orders. The Luftwaffe's attack capability was largely neglected, which meant that Allied land, sea and air operations were virtually unhindered by air attacks. The minimal casualties incurred in the eventual crossing of the Rhine being a prime example. This achievement of air superiority was perhaps the most important factor in making Allied victory possible.

Harris claims (rightly in my view) that, apart from the question of air superiority, Bomber Command was also the most important single element in the land and sea fighting. On land who knows what forces Rostekel could have mustered against the Allied landings had it not been for the sustained bombing attacks on routes leading to the invasion areas? (Harris was not overjoyed at being given this task, believing that his area-bombing was more likely to produce results; but he carried out his duty loyally.) On the maritime side, the "fleet in being" was confined largely to Scapa Flow. The fact is that the mining operations and attacks on German submarine bases carried out by Bomber Command sank more ships and destroyed more submarines than the Royal Navy did.

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Bomber Command's unreadiness to meet its task at the outbreak of war must be laid most particularly at the door of politicians and of Treasury officials. Nevertheless, the Air Staff of the day must also accept some blame for not looking sufficiently to the

whatever the discomforts, and died, of the necessity to work. By 1944, 42,000 had worked for the German war effort in Germany.

Cobb does not suffer from his harsh words, and is reserved for the most part. He is not an intellectual. There is no sense of their occasional and nastiness, surely an unusual quality in the context, and talent, which I would dispute. Lucien Rebatet. *Pour la France*, a final chapter on the short shorts, high-flow *la France* mass-produced a unibombardier or beribombardier, above all, the *bébé*, *le Mutt*, promoted from regional obscurity to a headgear, then gradually after 1944, perhaps because of associations, though more to believe, because all forms of dress were falling out of

The book's subtle misreading. Like all of Cobb's writings, this is intensely personal, the richer for it. The unpunctuated brings great events down to level; even the passages of First World War are autobiographical touches. It is easy, unassuming book to read, amusing, always idiosyncratic. It is not time for a major return to major history?

The operational context of the bomber force left a lot to be desired, and realistic training exercises have been devised under operational conditions. Essential recent development in bombing tactics and techniques were not a distinguished serving described the pre-war situation:

We had inadequate training for air observers and the crews were inexperienced in potential operational types aircraft; they had no opportunities for long formation bombing exercises; inadequate facilities for high speed bombing training; on-board basic facilities for crew; difficulties in night navigation; and a time expected by his family to take orders. He didn't do so, but he was strongly influenced by the distrust of liberalism and socialism that prevailed among his co-religionists, and he never lost deeply rooted aversion to materialistic philosophies. During his legal studies, which he pursued at the Universities of Berlin, Munich and Strassburg, he had equally negative feelings about the prevalence of positivism in legal thought, and while at Strassburg, was strongly influenced by the ideas of neo-Kantianism, whose great exponent there was Wilhelm Windelband.

Schmitt's first essays were impregnated with this view that politics must be responsive to a higher law and that religious conviction and nationalism, morality and power were not reconcilable opposites but could be integrated harmoniously.

All of this, he abandoned, as thoroughly as Rockwell had jettisoned his liberalism as a result of the military collapse and the revolution of 1918. His change of attitude became apparent for the first time in 1919 with the publication of his essay *Politische Romanik*, in which he not only rejected the romantic tradition because of its tendency to focus upon possibility rather than actuality, but also its privatization of experience, but advanced the argument that speculation and discussion—the eternal talkiness, which Schmitt was, in his opinion, the ability to make decisions. This last idea he elaborated in different ways in *Die Diktatur*

## Decision, not discussion

Gordon A. Craig

Joseph W. Bendersky

*Carl Schmitt: Theorist For The Reich*  
320pp Guildford: Princeton University Press.  
0 691 09395 4

In 1853, in his *Grundzüge der Realpolitik*, a work that added a new term to the vocabulary of politics, Ludwig August von Rochau wrote, "The discussion of the question, Who should rule, whether law, wisdom, virtue, whether an individual or the few or the many, this question belongs to the realm of philosophical speculation; practical politics is concerned primarily only with the simple fact that it is only power that can rule. To rule is to wield power, and only he can wield power who possesses it."

Rochau was one of the not inconsiderable number of German liberals who, after the failure of the revolution of 1848, threw all of their former principles overboard and convinced themselves that the time had come to face up to the hard facts of political life. Like most of them, he became, after some initial hesitation, an ardent follower of Bismarck; and in 1869, in an essay on "Political Idealism and Reality," in the expanded version of his treatise, he made this abundantly clear. "Statecraft," he wrote, "is nothing else than the art of success, applied to specific objectives of the State," adding in a contemptuous aside, "The use of the term 'success' will immediately cause a howl of moral indignation in certain party camps, but this kind of protest merely reveals the complete political futility of the spirit from which it comes."

In the century that followed the publication of these views, Rochau had many followers in Germany, but perhaps none as unconditional in his acceptance of them and as willing to follow them to their most extreme consequences as Carl Schmitt, the most widely read and respected political scientist of the Weimar Republic and, equally, one of the first of his leading intellectuals to declare allegiance to Hitler after the Führer assumed power in January 1933, and to defend and, indeed, justify all of Hitler's subsequent actions.

A Rhinelander by birth and the son of lower-middle-class parents of modest means, Schmitt grew up in a highly Roman Catholic milieu, three of his uncles were priests and had played a prominent part in the Kulturkampf, and was for a time expected by his family to take orders. He didn't do so, but he was strongly influenced by the distrust of liberalism and socialism that prevailed among his co-religionists, and he never lost deeply rooted aversion to materialistic philosophies. During his legal studies, which he pursued at the Universities of Berlin, Munich and Strassburg, he had equally negative feelings about the prevalence of positivism in legal thought, and while at Strassburg, was strongly influenced by the ideas of neo-Kantianism, whose great exponent there was Wilhelm Windelband.

Schmitt's first essays were impregnated with this view that politics must be responsive to a higher law and that religious conviction and nationalism, morality and power were not reconcilable opposites but could be integrated harmoniously.

All of this, he abandoned, as thoroughly as Rockwell had jettisoned his liberalism as a result of the military collapse and the revolution of 1918. His change of attitude became apparent for the first time in 1919 with the publication of his essay *Politische Romanik*, in which he not only rejected the romantic tradition because of its tendency to focus upon possibility rather than actuality, but also its privatization of experience, but advanced the argument that speculation and discussion—the eternal talkiness, which Schmitt was, in his opinion, the ability to make decisions. This last idea he elaborated in different ways in *Die Diktatur*

(1921), in *Politische Theologie* (1922)—a short book on sovereignty and the state of exception in which he argued that in concrete situations the crucial question is not "What is the law?" but "Who decides?" and concluded that "who decides is sovereign"—in *Die geistesgeschichtliche Lage des heutigen Parlamentarismus* (1923), an attack upon parliamentary government as "a poor façade covering the rule by parties" and vested economic interests, and especially in his influential book *Der Begriff des Politischen* (1928).

In this last work, Schmitt declared that all politics can be reduced to the ability to distinguish between friend and enemy, that the State, if it is not to abrogate its sovereignty, must be able to make that distinction in foreign and domestic politics and to act upon it, without regard to moral or normative considerations, and that the attempts of traditional liberalism to transform political conflict into economic competition or public discussion merely "deprived State and politics of their specific meaning."

It was with this intellectual baggage that Schmitt became a defender of the presidential governments that governed, or tried to govern, Germany after the collapse of the Mueller cabinet in 1930. But his long fascination with the problem of the emergency situation and with the forms of dictatorship that it produced prevented him from being shocked or alienated when a real dictator came to power in Germany. Schmitt's theories were admirably suited to justify any kind of authority, and it wasn't long before they were being used to defend not only Hitler's Enabling Act and the murders of the Night of the Long Knives but the Führer's ambitions in eastern Europe and his outrages against the Jews as well.

In his interesting new book on Schmitt, Joseph Bendersky does not for a minute condone any of these activities. He makes it clear that his protagonist compromised himself for the sake of protection, self-aggrandizement, and public attention, that for a considerable time he profited from his privileged position as a protégé of Hermann Goering and his status as Prussian state councillor, professor in Berlin, and director of the National Socialist University Teachers Group, and that, when the whole edifice of the Third Reich came tumbling down, he was not really ashamed of his part in it, cheerfully describing his conduct as the result of personal weakness and himself as a mere scholar who couldn't be held legally responsible for the consequences of what he had written.

All of this, Bendersky says, was "reprehensible" and reveals "a personal weakness as far as moral principles are concerned." But even so, he argues, it cannot be claimed, as some have done, that Schmitt paved the way for the Nazis or shared their ideological beliefs, and his actions after 1933 should not be allowed to overshadow the earlier aspects of his life and thought. What has been needed, he writes, is a systematic examination of the relationship between Schmitt's ideas and the changing political circumstances that he confronted.

This Bendersky has endeavoured to provide, and, although one may disagree with his conclusions, it cannot be denied that he gives a very persuasive picture of Schmitt as a scholar who, with a greater sense of responsibility than most of his university colleagues in the Weimar years, applied himself seriously to the study of political problems and contemporary political problems and, in the end, was not only a weakling, but a failure. The lack of a fundamental consensus, a bureaucratized party system that made the formation of governments difficult and their tenure brief, and a parliament that was losing popularity because it provided neither genuine discussion of national issues nor energetic attempts to deal with them.

In supporting the presidential governments of Brüning, Papen and Schleicher, Schmitt was, in Bendersky's opinion, seeking to legitimize the only means of saving the Weimar Republic that had any promise

of success—freeing the State from the fetters of *Parteiwirtschaft* so that it could deal with the enemies of the constitution, the Communists on the one hand and the Nazis on the other. The key figure in developing a strategy to attain this objective was, in Schmitt's view, General Kurt von Schleicher, whose political outlook he shared and whose military skills he had admired; and—in ways that are described here in rich and satisfying detail—he supported the general's activities with his pen from the time of the formation of the Brüning government until the final collapse of Schleicher's grand design in January 1933. During this time, breaches of constitutional law—like Papen's *Preußenschlag* of July 20, 1932—did not concern him greatly, for, Bendersky writes, "A true defender of the constitution must, he stated repeatedly, distinguish between enemy and take necessary measures, including the temporary suspension of certain parts of the constitution, to ensure that anti-constitutional parties did not acquire the legal reins of power." Thus, he was bitterly disappointed when President von Hindenburg refused Schleicher's request in late January 1933 for a declaration of emergency, a banning of the Nazi and Communist parties, a dissolution of the Reichstag, and a grant to the general of extraordinary powers. In choosing Hitler to succeed Schleicher, Hindenburg had, in Schmitt's opinion, failed in his responsibility to the constitution and invited its subversion.

Yet, when he heard of Hitler's appointment as Chancellor, Schmitt wrote in his diary that he was "irritated, and yet somehow relieved; at least, a decision," and this equanimity makes us doubt whether he was as dedicated a defender of the constitution as Bendersky would have us believe. It never seems to have occurred to Schmitt that there might be other ways of supporting the republic than those that he and Schleicher devised. There is no mention here, for instance, of Minister President Otto Braun's suggestion to Brüning of a linkage between the Reich government and the democratic government of Prussia, with the Prussian Minister President serving as Vice Chancellor, a proposal that might have revitalized the faltering democracy but was hastily vetoed by Hindenburg, doubtless with Schleicher's (and perhaps Schmitt's) approval. It is hard to believe that Schmitt had any enthusiasm for a revival of the republic in a form that could have been approved by the liberal and democratic parties. It is not easy, indeed, to reject Christian Graf von Krockow's view that the logic of his thought always tended toward dictatorship because he believed that the essence of politics was to be found in those exceptional moments that transcended the bounds of tradition, law and morality, decisions which, as he said in *Politische Theologie*, were, "normatively seen, born out of nothingness (*aus dem Nichts*)," and could in practical terms come only from the existential will of someone

wielding arbitrary power. To anyone who believes in natural law and popular sovereignty, this kind of thinking must, as Ernst Troeltsch said in a famous lecture, seem to be nothing but a mixture of mysticism and brutality, and it leads one to suspect that Schmitt's repudiation of romanticism in 1919 was not as definitive as he seemed to think. Certainly he had some common traits with neo-romantic thinkers of the Weimar period like Wilhelm Stapel and Ernst Jünger, with whom he sometimes associated: a hatred of the Enlightenment and all its works, a belief that action was more important than reflection, a tendency to see the State in mystical terms rather than pragmatically and to personify it at the expense of its components, and, finally, the idealization of the exceptional at the expense of the normal, which led him to talk about the state of emergency as a situation in which "the power of real life breaks through the shell of a mechanism that has been hardened by repetition."

If there is anything in this, then the last phase of Schmitt's life was at least logical. In his book on romanticism, he wrote, "Everything romantic stands in the service of unromantic energies." This described his own fate. He went willingly to the Nazis, and they used him to give a gloss of legality to their crimes while that still seemed important to them. When that ceased to be true, they cast him aside as someone whose *quintessence* were alien to the spirit of the New Order that they were creating.

## Building up the party

F. L. Carsten

Peter D. Stachura

*Gregor Strasser and the Rise of Nazism*  
178pp. Allen and Unwin. £12.50.  
0 04 943027 0

Peter D. Stachura (Editor)

*The Nazi Machtergreifung*  
191pp. Allen and Unwin. £12.50.  
0 04 943026 2

For many years before 1933 Gregor Strasser was the second most important leader of the National Socialist Party, and during the five crucial years from 1928 to 1932 he was in charge of party organization. It was thanks to him that the party machinery became an efficient instrument and the "seizure of power" a practical possibility. Yet comparatively little is known about this Bavarian pharmacist and no biography has been devoted to him. There are a few bare facts: in 1924-25 he built up the party organization in North Germany—vital to a party which until then had been local to Bavaria and not very successful; there he and his brother Otto drafted a "German Socialist" programme which met with Hitler's displeasure and had to be jettisoned. At the end of 1932 he fell out with Hitler and resigned his party offices. Like Hitler he remained a party member. Like Hitler he was murdered in June 1934 during the "night of the long knives."

Peter D. Stachura has written a brief biographical sketch of Gregor Strasser which is both readable and informative, although many gaps remain: partly because Strasser's papers were seized and destroyed by the Gestapo in 1934, partly because so little is known about his early life. We know, for example, that Otto Strasser, during the "German revolution" of 1918-19, became a leader of a left-wing military organization, the *Republikanischer Führerbund*, which aimed at providing reliable leaders for the new German army; but was Gregor opposed to this venture or did he sympathize with it? None of this is mentioned in the book although only a few years later the two brothers cooperated very closely.

One of Strasser's main points is that there never was a "Nazi Left," not even in 1925, that Strasser's socialism was vacuous, amounting to little more than an emotionally based, superficial, petty-bourgeois anti-capitalism

This is confirmed by a perusal of the 1925 draft programme, with its "hereditary leases", wages in kind, compulsory guilds and corporations, the participation of public authorities in private enterprises. The original programme of the National Socialist Party contained many equally nebulous, utopian demands, and both were far removed from any real socialism.

The other principal point advanced by the book concerns Strasser's views in 1932. In Stachura's interpretation Strasser had come "to distrust and finally detest the unacceptable face of Hitlerian National Socialism" and "was really aligned with a neo-conservative nationalist outlook which put country before party." It is true that by 1932 Strasser had many links with neo-conservative nationalist groups, especially with the Taktkreis (named after its journal, *Die Tat*), such as General von Schleicher, such as General von Schleicher. But we know very little about Strasser's own views. In public, until the break with Hitler, he continued to propagate National Socialist ideas, including a violent anti-semitism, although Stachura argues that he did not accept the violent, biologically inspired racist anti-semitism of Hitler.

The 1925 draft programme—very much like the original party programme—wanted to deprive all German Jews of their citizenship and thus would have destroyed the economic existence of most of them. Stachura himself mentions Strasser's frequent "outbursts" against the Jews (and many others) which resulted in "a long spate of court cases" and short spells of imprisonment.

At the end of his book Stachura writes: "Strasser had fought for a rather different kind of Germany, strong, respected, proud, but never fanatical, destructive, intolerant." He assumes that towards the end of his life Strasser had become, the very opposite of his earlier years, no longer a fanatic but tolerant and constructive. Yet there is no real evidence for this, and it would imply a radical change of opinion within a short time. It seems too good to be true.

The small volume on *The Nazi Machtergreifung* edited by Stachura is oddly named, for it contains not a single essay on the "Seizure of Power"—which surely would have been worth discussing fifty years after the momentous event. The book contains ten essays on different aspects of early Nazi history, three by Stachura and seven by other historians; on women, youth, the industrialists, the

army, the academics, the churches and their attitudes to the rise of Hitler.

Particularly interesting is the essay by Dick Geary on the industrial elite. It stresses that by 1932 most of the leading industrialists—like so many other parts of the German establishment—were prepared to tolerate a coalition between the German Nationalists and the National Socialists and were firm opponents of the political system of the Weimar Republic. Even earlier, the majority of the industrialists aimed at the abolition of the eight-hour day, of statutory wage legislation and mandatory arbitration in labour conflicts: the great gains of the working class from 1918-19. They wanted to become "masters in their own house" once again, without interference from trade unions or factory councils, and confidently expected a right-wing government to dismantle the social achievements of the republic.

Interesting, too, is Michael Geyer on the Reichswehr, who emphasizes that the army's main aim was rearmament and the regaining of military strength. Geyer claims that by 1930 the German officer corps had become "remarkably bourgeois": yet in 1931 nineteen generals out of a total of thirty-four were noblemen, and were about 24 per cent of all officers, at a time when the German nobility numbered 0.14 per cent of the total population. Gill Stephenson finds that women only formed 7.8 per cent of the membership of the National Socialist Party when Hitler became chancellor and that in elections fewer women voted National Socialist than men, at least in areas for which we possess separate figures. But in Bavaria as well as in Cologne the percentage of male and female National Socialist voters tended to equality by March 1933.

John Conway discusses the role of the Protestant and Catholic churches which (like the army) formed a "state within the state" and rejected the revolution of 1918 and its results. The Protestant lay synods were even more right-wing than the church hierarchy, and there was also an important group of Protestant theologians who preached *völkisch* ideology and anti-semitism. In Conway's opinion, it was above all the longing for a strong leader and for a national revival along authoritarian lines which made the rise of National Socialism possible, especially in the Protestant parts of Germany. The volume provides food for thought and will be welcome to students and many others interested in the rise of a fascist mass movement.



# The occupiers and the occupied

Eugen Weber

ANDRÉ HALIMI  
La délation sous l'occupation  
312pp. Paris: Moreau, 79fr.  
2 85209 005 8

RICHARD COBB

French and Germans, Germans and French: A personal interpretation of France under two occupations  
188pp. University Press of New England (available in the UK through International Book Distributors). £10.95.  
0 87451 225 5

In 1942, to reward the population of Dieppe for their "correct" attitude during the Allied raid on the town, the Germans decided to release the French prisoners from the area whom they held in their camps. The news set off a trickle of visits to the local Kommandantur, from Dieppeois eager to denounce their husbands' Communist or other affiliations, real or imagined, in order to avoid homecomings that might trouble the alternative arrangements they had made in their absence.

This is not a story that André Halimi tells; but he does provide a long record of equally nauseating denunciations. During the years 1940-44, we are told that the French sent between 3 and 5 million poison-pen letters, many of them signed (a few are reproduced here in a nineteen-page appendix), to the French or German authorities, informing against Jews, masons, Gaullists, defeatists, anglophiles, résistants, or black marketeers. They accused neighbours, workmates, employees, lovers and relatives. Wives peached on husbands, mothers on sons, siblings on each other, administrators on administrators, concierges on locataires, parishioners on curés, lawyers, doctors, pharmacists and workpeeps on competitors.

They sought revenge, vented envy or spite, acted on principle, or pursued gain - rewards could range from a few hundred francs to ten thousand or more. Some tried to recapture or punish an errant husband. Some hoped for an apartment, or for a business boost. Some presumably enjoyed the exhilaration of power, or the fun of inflicting pain. Unfortunately, Halimi makes no attempt to analyse motives, let alone local traditions (denunciations and lettres anonymes seem to have spread in many places along with literacy). Clouzot's film *Le Corbeau* is never mentioned, nor are the explosive tensions of French family life. Some *délateurs*, of course, simply did their job as agents, informers, or *militants*. Among these professionals one must not forget the journalists who denounced Jews, alleged *résistants* and others they disliked, in articles complete with names and addresses, almost guaranteed to bring a visit from the Milice, if not from the Gestapo. "Ils n'en mourraient pas tous, mais tous étaient frappés." As the Resistance soon learned to respond in kind, in its publications and, more effectively, its London broadcasts.

Though the media were more visible and audible, while the telephone in the occupied zone was under constant surveillance, some letters were deliberately suppressed by the sympathetic postmen, and more ignored by disgraced Germans, especially when unsigned. But most denunciations produced action that could lead to arrest, deportation, eventually death. They were meant to do so - as with the wife of a Resistance leader, who denounced him on condition that he should not survive. Halimi's final chapter lists about 150 post-war trials out of the 125,000 cases investigated after the liberation, involving two of Jews, one of whom worked for the Gestapo, the other for Darmand's Milice.

This is not a very good book on an unsavoury subject. It does not indicate its basic sources, and gives the impression of having been put together largely with scissors and paste. It also errs in suggesting that Jews in the Unoccupied Zone wore the yellow star; they did not, but their identity

papers, marked JEW, were harder to discard than a piece of cloth. *La Délation* does, however, provide an extended footnote to Michael Marrus and Robert Paxton's book on *Vichy France and the Jews*, confirming the resentment evoked by Jewish refugees visible in hotels and cafés, apparently driving away their time (what else were they to do?), spending money freely (because forced to do so).

In this connection, Cavanna's autobiographical *Les Russoffs* notes that in 1943 ordinary people envied the fate of Jews and political prisoners "qui, pensions-nous, se prélassaient à ne rien faire dans leurs camps de concentration avec plantes vertes et terrains de golf". Refugees, or évacués, are *désœuvrés* almost by definition, targets of resentment not only as strangers but also as idlers, or else as unwanted competitors in the market for employment or goods. Exceptional circumstances offered exceptional opportunities to bare vexation and spite.

It would be interesting to know how French behaviour in this respect compared with that of other occupied peoples and, indeed, with that of Germans or Russians in the face of their own régimes. Was civic spirit particularly weak in France, was the odour of anarchy, so strong in 1940, exceptionally potent? Or, on the contrary, was self-deception encouraged by civic appeals, so that, after 1944 as before it, high principles could accommodate base ends and baser motives? Halimi reminds us that, in China (as in Iran) today, delation is regarded as a civic obligation. He does not point out that, in 1940-42 at least, many French could have regarded it in a similar light. After all, denouncing a criminal is a virtuous act, uncovering enemies of the nation a civic duty, at least since the Terror, except perhaps in those particular communities - Protestants in the Cévennes, Whites around Cholet - where discretion and survival have long gone hand in hand. Historical tradition informs social attitudes. Then, again, terms like *délation* (*teulricie*) or *dénonciation* (*teulricie*) do not turn comfortably into English, and trip awkwardly once translated. Does that suggest a culture more receptive to the tale-bearer and the sneak than that of the Anglo-Saxons? Or was the impotent rage born of defeat and despair especially acute in France, and were displacement activities focused on exposed, vulnerable targets particularly widespread? Did crisis exacerbate existing velleities, mistrust and envy, malice and spite, or merely reveal them?

Some of the questions Halimi does not raise and others that his narrower focus does not touch, are brought up in Richard Cobb's presentation of relations between *occupants* and *occupied*, not only in 1940-45, but in 1914-18 as well - a period which has received next to no attention. The familiarity born of constant rubbing against each other, of shared conditions, of simple human (and sexual) relationships, tends to be forgotten. Cobb recaptures it with compassion and sympathy in a chapter on the department of the Nord. He might have mentioned the *Blacks* re-annealed in 1940, and at the equivocal situation this created for many (fourteen of the twenty-one SS men finally tried at Bordeaux in 1953 for the massacre of Oradour were *Blacks* conscripts). But he movingly describes the peculiar situation of the north-western regions, doubly slogging through two German occupations, and their evacuated children who were often treated with suspicion and known as "les boches du Nord".

Despite such treatment, not entirely exceptional in a country much more magnanimous than it likes to admit, and neither of one province or another, the north-east remained almost impenetrable to Vichy influence. That may have been because the old familiar figure of the *boche* (no longer *chénou* or *fideline* or *chippin*) was more in evidence there than the very first, or because the

German military authorities, with possible annexation in mind, kept Vichy's representatives powerless and Vichy propaganda muted. It may have been due to the region's long-standing anglophile traditions (Cobb reminds us that Roubaix was the second French town after Le Havre, to found a soccer club, introduced in 1877 by two Yorkshire textile engineers). The fact is that, to the northerners, both war and occupation were far more real - and not just because de Gaulle was a Lillois and his wife a Calaisienne, for, after all, Pétain was also an *enfant du pays*. It was simply that, as Cobb points out, patriotism came easily to a frontier region always the first to experience the effects of war and invasion. For northerners, as for Lorrainers, the practical reality and its moral concomitants were much clearer than for Auvergnats or Languedociens.

The second German occupation, of course, is hardly unexplored. But, again, Cobb directs attention to topics normally wrapped in decent obscurity, like the role of the police - and, one should add, of the *gendarmérie* - a subject that has also been treated like a Victorian family secret, known to all, about which mum's the word. In films about the liberation of Paris, the last-minute somersault of the law's guardians, what Cobb calls "the carefully staged police mutiny of August 1944", is treated as the heroic centrepiece of events. Again, Cavanna places it in better perspective when he describes the riotous reaction of prisoners, *déportés* and STO workers, repatriated from Germany, parked in the giant Gaumont-Palace, and treated to a film in which the men in blue who

had turned most of them over to the Germans were presented as heroes of the liberation: "Fumiers! Salepés! Toujours du côté du manche!" A social history of the French police is crying out to be written, but it will have to wait a while.

Thanks in part to Henri Amouroy and Henri Michel, we know more about that collaboration of which cohabitation was a part, and which often came down to "a business relationship profitable to both parties" - not just in industry, the black market, on the pederastic front or on the fringes of the criminal world, but in unavailably numerous affairs among the middle young. Cobb draws on all this to talk of many everyday things, including the members of the SS (Charlemagne Division for whom Hitler was "le Grand Jules", but he might have said about the two million French prisoners in Germany, many of whom found a cushy billet, or even a home on a farm, and the thousands of STO volunteers, who found a job that paid in German factories, when work and *sous* at home were hard to come by.

To Cobb, for whom marginality is central and politically trivial concerns play the major role, as they do in life, such matters matter. He shows how occupier and occupied adjusted to each other where they had to, and largely ignored each other over great stretches of France where, almost until the end, the German presence remained unobtrusive. He reminds us of the normality of much everyday life; of the relief so many shared, and on which Vichy hurried, that the youth of France could live at home - at least till 1943 -

whatever the discomforts, while, shed, of the necessity to work as Germans if one was to work at all. By 1944, 420,000 French worked for the Germans in France, 171,000 in Germany.

Cobb does not suffer fools gladly, especially harmful fools, and his harsh words, in particular reserved for the comical humanness of collaboration, are of their occasional brilliance. He accuses them of nastiness, surely an ungenerous quality in the context; and of a talent, which I would dispute, for one of the nastiest among the trappings of Vichy: bare but short shorts, high-flown long *francques* mass-produced to be ribbed or beribboned holes; above all, the *béret*, *beret* du *Midi*, promoted from regional obscurity to national headgear, then gradually done after 1944, perhaps because of its associations, though more likely because all forms of head dress were falling out of fashion.

The book's subtitle is misleading. Like all of Cobb's writings, this is intensely personal, the richer for it. The unpolished brings great events down to the level: even the passages on First World War are coloured autobiographical touches. Here, easy, unassuming good to read, amusing, always idiosyncratic, isn't it time for a major historical return to major history?

## In the dropping zone

Neil Cameron

NORMAN LONGMATE

The Bombers: The RAF Offensive  
in Germany, 1939-1945  
416pp. Hutchinson. £12.95.  
0 09 151580 7

Bomber Command's assault on Europe will continue to be discussed and criticized by historians for the foreseeable future. It was a historic episode. Forty years and more after the 1,000-bomber raid on Cologne it is easy to sit back and criticize the success or otherwise of such operations. What is missing from the work of most military historians, however, is the factor of wartime confusion and the tensions and pressures under which politicians and military commanders had to work and make decisions. There was also the demand of the British public for revenge attacks, or at least for some sort of reprisal for the aggression which Germany had inflicted on Europe.

Government policy in the 1930s had starved the armed forces of the degree of financial support needed to equip them to face up to the growing strength of Germany. It is interesting to speculate whether Hitler would have been deterred if this support had been available, so that forces of comparable size and efficiency to his own had been available to him.

The wartime role of Bomber Command, Sir Arthur Harris, has always maintained that "the contest is always right", and has quoted statements by German leaders bearing witness to the effectiveness of Bomber Command's raids. Even shortly before his recent death, Speer for example maintained that "German war production was vitally affected by both day and night attacks".

Another major effect, achieved by the bombing assault by British and American air forces, and one often overlooked by historians, was the gaining and maintaining of air superiority over Europe and the sea around the Continent. Goering was compelled to react defensively and his *Luftwaffe* became completely embroiled in the assault developed. German factories were driven more and more into manufacturing aircraft

for defence and even the first jet and rocket aircraft were deployed in defence, on the Führer's orders. The Luftwaffe's attack capability was largely neglected, which meant that Allied land, sea and air operations were virtually unhindered by air attacks, the minimal casualties inflicted in the eventual crossing of the Rhine being a prime example. This achievement of air superiority was perhaps the most important factor in making Allied victory possible.

Harris claims (rightly in my view) that, apart from the question of air superiority, Bomber Command was also the most important single element in the land and sea fighting. On land who knows what forces Rostkeil could have mustered against the Allied landings had it not been for the sustained bombing attacks on transportation targets on routes leading to the invasion areas? (Harris was not overjoyed at his own bombing task, believing that the area-bombing was more likely to produce results; but he carried out orders loyally.) On the maritime side, the "fleet in being", apart from a few important exceptions, was confined largely to Scapa Flow. The fact is that the mining operations and attacks on German submarine bases carried out by Bomber Command sank more ships and destroyed more submarines than the Royal Navy did.

There were other important effects too. Speer pointed to the fact that the bombing of factories in Germany deprived the German army on all fronts of 80 per cent of its anti-tank guns, and those guns which also had an anti-aircraft capability were dispersed to defend a wide variety of targets within Germany itself. Some one million fit soldiers were deployed to man these guns, thus taking them away from full combat duties, while hundreds of thousands of skilled tradesmen were not called up because they were required to repair bomb damage. Speer goes on to suggest that if this manpower and capability had been released for, say, the Russian front, the result of the war could have been very different.

Bomber Command's unreadiness to meet its task at the outbreak of war must be laid most particularly at the door of politicians and of Treasury officials. Nevertheless, the Air Staff of the day must also accept some blame for not looking sufficiently to the

future. The operational evaluation of the bomber force left a lot to be desired and realistic training exercises had never been devised under operational conditions. Essential research and development in bombing techniques and techniques were neglected. A distinguished serving officer described the pre-war situation in these terms:

We had inadequate numbers of training for air observers as the crews were inexperienced in potential operational types of aircraft; they had inadequate opportunities for long distance formation bombing practice; inadequate facilities for high speed bombing training; inadequate on-board basic facilities for the crew; difficulties in target identification particularly in the night areas. We were small and trying desperately to prepare for a quite beyond the levels of present experience.

Of Dresden and some of the cities that were destroyed, there is more one can say except that the destruction was wrongly blamed on Bomber Command and the Commander, when the direct blame came from the Chiefs of Staff, the blessing of the Prime Minister, was no inordinate praise for Harris at the end of the war, as there was for the other great commanders, Montgomery, Alexander, Canine and Tedder, but the fact that none of their operations would have been successful without the aid of Bomber Command.

Nor was recognition given to the dead of Bomber Command, who carried out their duties loyally, even though there were stars for some of them, but the fact that many holders of which had not been shot fired in anger. Those who ordered the bombing attacks should all be forgotten as well as the survivors stand and cheer the two-year-old Harris when he appeared at his annual reunion?

Norman Longmate's book is a useful account of the bombing war as it goes, and of the strengths and weaknesses in the development of Bomber Command's capability. He has added a great deal to previous accounts except perhaps for the interview with Harris himself.

## Decision, not discussion

Gordon A. Craig

JOSEPH W. BENDERSKY

Carl Schmitt: Theorist For The Reich  
320pp Guildford: Princeton University Press.  
0 691 09395 4

In 1853, in his *Grundzüge der Realpolitik*, a work that added a new term to the vocabulary of politics, Ludwig August von Rochau wrote, "The discussion of the question, Who should rule, whether law, wisdom, virtue, whether an individual or the few or the many, this question belongs to the realm of philosophical speculation; practical politics is concerned primarily only with the simple fact that it is only power that can rule. To rule is to wield power, and only he can wield power who possesses it."

Rochau was one of the not inconsiderable number of German liberals who, after the failure of the revolution of 1848, threw all of their former principles overboard and convinced themselves that the time had come to face up to the hard facts of political life. Like most of them, he became, after some initial hesitation, an ardent follower of Bismarck; and in 1869, in an essay on "Political Idealism and Reality", in the expanded version of his treatise, he made this abundantly clear. "Statecraft," he wrote, "is nothing else than the art of success, applied to specific objectives of the State," adding in a contemptuous aside, "The use of the term 'success' will immediately cause a howl of moral indignation in certain party camps, but this kind of protest merely reveals the complete political futility of the spirit from which it comes."

In the century that followed the publication of these views, Rochau had many followers in Germany, but perhaps none as unconditional in his acceptance of them and as willing to follow them to their most extreme consequences as Carl Schmitt, the political scientist and jurist of the Weimar Republic and, equally, one of the first of his leading intellectuals to declare allegiance to Hitler after the Führer assumed power in January 1933, and to defend and, indeed, justify all of Hitler's subsequent actions.

A Rhinelander by birth and the son of lower-middle-class parents of modest means, Schmitt grew up in a rigidly Roman Catholic milieu (three of his uncles were priests and he had a prominent part in the *Kulturnot*) and was expected by his family to take orders. He didn't do so, but he was strongly influenced by the distrust of liberalism and socialism that prevailed among his co-religionists, and he never lost a deeply rooted aversion to materialistic philosophies. During his legal studies, which he pursued at the Universities of Berlin, Munich and Strasbourg in the years before the Great War, he had equally negative feelings about the prevalence of positivism in legal thought and, while at Strasbourg, was strongly influenced by the ideas of neo-Kantianism, whose great exponent there was Wilhelm Windelband. Schmitt's first essays were impregnated with the view that politics must be based on religious conviction and nationalism, morality and power were not irreconcilable opposites but could be integrated harmoniously.

All of this he abandoned, as thoroughly as Rochau had jettisoned his liberalism as a result of the military collapse and the revolution of 1918. His change of attitude became apparent for the first time in 1919 with the publication of his essay *Politische Romanik*, in which he not only rejected the romantic tradition because of its tendency to focus upon possibility rather than actuality, its emphasis on form rather than substance, and its privatization of experience, but advanced the argument that speculation and discussion - the eternal talkiness of the romantic - was alien to politics, which consisted in the ability to make decisions. This last idea he elaborated in different ways in *Die Diktatur*

(1921), in *Politische Theologie* (1922) - a short book on sovereignty and the state of exception in which he argued that in concrete situations the crucial question is not "What is the law?" but "Who decides?" and concluded that he who decides is sovereign - in *Die geistesgeschichtliche Lage des heutigen Parlamentarismus* (1923), an attack upon parliamentary government as "a poor facade covering the rule by parties and vested economic interests" and especially in his influential book *Der Begriff des Politischen* (1928).

In this last work, Schmitt declared that all politics can be reduced to the ability to distinguish between friend and enemy, that the State, if it is not to abrogate its sovereignty, must be able to make that distinction in foreign and domestic politics and to act upon it, without regard to moral or normative considerations, and that the attempts of traditional liberalism to transform political conflict into economic competition or public discussion merely "deprived State and politics of their specific meaning."

It was with this intellectual baggage that Schmitt became a defender of the presidential governments that governed, or tried to govern, Germany after the collapse of the Mueller cabinet in 1930. But his long fascination with the problem of the emergency situation and with the forms of dictatorship that it produced prevented him from being shocked or alienated when a real dictator came to power in Germany. Schmitt's theories were admirably suited to justify any kind of authority, and it wasn't long before they were being used to defend not only Hitler's Enabling Act and the murders of the Night of the Long Knives but the Führer's ambitions in eastern Europe and his outrages against the Jews as well.

In his interesting new book on Schmitt, Joseph Bendersky does not for a minute condone any of these activities. He makes it clear that his protagonist compromised himself for the sake of protection, self-aggrandizement, and public attention, that for a considerable time he profited from his privileged position as a protégé of Hermann Goering and his status as Prussian state councillor, professor in Berlin, and director of the National Socialist University Teachers Group, and that, when the whole edifice of the Third Reich came tumbling down, he was not really ashamed of his part in it, cheerfully describing his conduct as the result of personal weakness and himself as a mere scholar who couldn't be held legally responsible for the consequences of what he had written. All of this, Bendersky says, is "reprehensible" and reveals "a personal weakness as far as moral principles are concerned." But even so, he argues, it cannot be claimed, as some have done, that Schmitt paved the way for the Nazis or shared their ideological beliefs, and his actions after 1933 should not be allowed to overshadow the earlier aspects of his life and thought. What has been needed, he writes, is a systematic examination of the relationship between Schmitt's ideas and the changing political circumstances that he confronted.

This Bendersky has endeavoured to provide and, although one may disagree with his conclusions, it cannot be denied that he gives a very persuasive picture of Schmitt as a scholar who, with a greater sense of responsibility than most of his university colleagues, was in the Weimar years, applied himself seriously to contemporary political problems and, sooner and more incisively than most, appreciated the real weaknesses of the constitutional system - the lack of a fundamental consensus, a bureaucratized party system that made the formation of governments difficult and their tenure brief, and a parliament that was losing popular support because it provided neither genuine discussion of national issues nor energetic attempts to deal with them.

In supporting the presidential governments of Brüning, Papen and Schleicher, Schmitt was, in Bendersky's opinion, seeking to legitimize the only means of saving the Weimar Republic that had any promise

of success - freeing the State from the fetters of *Parteiwirtschaft* so that it could deal with the enemies of the constitution, the Communists on the one hand and the Nazis on the other. The key figure in developing a strategy to attain this objective was, in Schmitt's view, General Kurt von Schleicher, whose political outlook he shared and whose methods he seems to have admired; and - in ways that are described here in rich and satisfying detail - he supported the general's activities with his pen from the time of the formation of the Brüning government until the final collapse of Schleicher's grand design in January 1933. During this time, branches of constitutional law - like Papen's *Preußensches Gesetz* of July 20, 1932 - did not concern him greatly, for, as Bendersky writes, "A true defender of the constitution must, he stated repeatedly, distinguish between enemy and the necessary measures, including the temporary suspension of certain parts of the constitution, to ensure that anti-constitutional parties did not acquire the legal reins of power." Thus, he was bitterly disappointed when President von Hindenburg refused Schleicher's request in late January 1933 for a declaration of emergency, a banning of the Nazi and Communist parties, a dissolution of the Reichstag, and a grant to the general of extraordinary powers. In choosing Hitler to succeed Schleicher, Hindenburg had, in Schmitt's opinion, failed in his responsibility to the constitution and invited its subversion.

Yet, when he heard of Hitler's appointment as Chancellor, Schmitt wrote in his diary that he was "irritated, and yet somehow relieved; at least, a decision," and this equanimity makes us doubt whether he said in a famous lecture, seem to be nothing but a mixture of mysticism and brutality, and it leads one to suspect that Schmitt's repudiation of romanticism in 1919 was not as definitive as he seemed to think. Certainly he had some common traits with neo-romantic thinkers of the Weimar period like Wilhelm Stapel and Ernst Jünger, with whom he sometimes associated: a hatred of the Enlightenment and all its works, a belief that action was more important than reflection, a tendency to see the State in mystical terms rather than pragmatically and to personify it at the expense of its components, and, finally, the idealization of the exceptional at the expense of the normal, which led him to talk about the state of emergency as a situation in which "the power of real life breaks through the shell of a mechanism that has been hardened by repetition."

If there is anything in this, then the last phase of Schmitt's life was at least logical. In his book on romanticism, he wrote, "Everything romantic stands in the service of unromantic energies." This described his own fate. He went willingly to the Nazis, and they used him to give a gloss of legality to their crimes while that still seemed important to them. When that ceased to be true, they cast him aside as someone whose *quiescent* was alien to the spirit of the New Order that they were creating.

## Building up the party

F. L. Carsten

PETER D. STACHURA

Gregor Strasser and the Rise of Nazism  
178pp. Allen and Unwin. £12.50.  
0 04 943027 0

PETER D. STACHURA (Editor)

The Nazi Machtergreifung  
191pp. Allen and Unwin. £12.50.  
0 04 943026 2

For many years before 1933 Gregor Strasser was the second most important leader of the National Socialist Party, and during the five crucial years from 1928 to 1932 he was in charge of party organization. It was thanks to him that the party machinery became an efficient instrument and the "seizure of power" a practical possibility. Yet comparatively little is known about this Bavarian pharmacist and no biography has been devoted to him. There are a few bare facts: in 1924-25 he built up the party organization in North Germany - vital to a party which until then had been local to Bavaria and not very successful; there he and his brother Otto drafted a "German Socialist" programme which met with Hitler's displeasure and had to be jettisoned. At the end of 1932 he fell out with Hitler and resigned his party membership. Like him, he remained a party member. Like him, he was murdered in June 1934 during the "night of the long knives."

Peter D. Stachura has written a brief biographical sketch of Gregor Strasser which is both readable and informative, although many gaps remain: partly because Strasser's papers were seized and destroyed by the Gestapo in 1934, partly because so little is known about his early life. We know, for example, that Otto Strasser, during the German revolution of 1918-19, became a leader of a left-wing military organization, the Republikanischer Arbeiterbund, which aimed at providing reliable leaders for the new German army; but was Gregor opposed to this venture or did he oppose it with it? None of this is mentioned in the book although only a few years later the two brothers cooperated very closely.

One of Stachura's main points is that there never was a "Nazi Left", not even in 1925, that Strasser's socialism was "vacuous, amounting to little more than an emotionally based, superfluous, petty-bourgeois anti-capitalism,"

This is confirmed by a perusal of the 1925 draft programme, with its "hereditary leases", wages in kind, compulsory guilds and corporations, the participation of public authorities in private enterprises. The original programme of the National Socialist Party contained many equally nebulous, utopian demands, and both were far removed from any real socialism.

The other principal point advanced by the book concerns Strasser's views in 1932. In Stachura's interpretation Strasser had come "to distrust and finally detest the unacceptable face of Hitlerian National Socialism" and "was really aligned with a neo-conservative nationalist outlook which put country before party". It is true that by 1932 Strasser had many links with neo-conservative nationalists groups, especially with the *Tat* (named after its journal, *Die Tat*), such as General von Schleicher, such as leading right-wing politicians, such as General von Schleicher's own views. In public, until the break with Hitler, he continued to propagate National Socialist ideas, including a violent anti-semitism, although Stachura argues that he did not accept the violent, biologically inspired racist anti-semitism of Hitler. The 1925 draft programme - very much like the original party programme - wanted to deprive all German Jews of their citizenship and thus would have destroyed the economic existence of most of them. Stachura himself mentions Strasser's frequent "outbursts" against the Jews (and many others) which resulted in "a long space of court cases" and short spells of imprisonment.

At the end of his book Stachura writes: "Strasser had fought for a rather different kind of Germany, strong, respected, proud, but not fanatical, destructive, intolerant." He thus assumes that towards the end of his life Strasser had become the very opposite of his earlier years, no longer fanatic but tolerant and constructive. Yet there is no real evidence for this, and it would imply a radical change of opinion within a short time. It seems too good to be true.

The small volume on *The Nazi Machtergreifung* edited by Stachura is oddly named, for it contains not a single essay on the "Seizure of Power" - which surely would have been worth discussing fifty years after the momentous event. The book contains ten essays on different aspects of early German thought and will be welcome to students and many others interested in the rise of a fascist mass movement.

wielding arbitrary power. To anyone who believes in natural law and popular sovereignty, this kind of thinking must, as Ernst Troeltsch said in a famous lecture, seem to be nothing but a mixture of mysticism and brutality, and it leads one to suspect that Schmitt's repudiation of romanticism in 1919 was not as definitive as he seemed to think. Certainly he had some common traits with neo-romantic thinkers of the Weimar period like Wilhelm Stapel and Ernst Jünger, with whom he sometimes associated: a hatred of the Enlightenment and all its works, a belief that action was more important than reflection, a tendency to see the State in mystical terms rather than pragmatically and to personify it at the expense of its components, and, finally, the idealization of the exceptional at the expense of the normal, which led him to talk about the state of emergency as a situation in which "the power of real life breaks through the shell of a mechanism that has been hardened by repetition."

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Particularly interesting is the essay by Dick Geary on the industrial elite. It stresses that by 1932 most of the leading industrialists - like so many other parts of the German establishment - were prepared to tolerate a coalition between the German Nationalists and the National Socialists and were firm opponents of the political system of the Weimar Republic. Even earlier, the majority of the industrialists aimed at the abolition of the eight-hour day, of statutory wage legislation and mandatory arbitration in labour conflicts; the great gains of the working class from 1918-19. They wanted to become "masters in their own house" once again, without interference from trade unions or factory councils, and confidently expected a right-wing government to dismantle the social achievements of the republic.

Interesting, too, is Michael Geyer on the Reichswehr, who emphasizes that the army's main aim was rearmament and the regaining of military strength. Geyer claims that by 1930 the German officer corps had become "remarkably bourgeois": yet in 1931 nineteen generals out of a total of thirty-four were noblemen, as were about 24 per cent of all officers, at a time when the German nobility numbered 0.14 per cent of the total population. Gill Stephenson finds that women only formed 7.8 per cent of the membership of the National Socialist Party when Hitler became chancellor and that in elections fewer women voted National Socialist than men, at least in areas for which we possess separate figures. But in Bavaria as well as in Cologne the percentage of male and female National Socialist voters tended to equality by March 1933.

John Conway discusses the role of the Protestant and Catholic churches which (like the army) formed a "state within the state" and rejected the revolution of 1918 and its results. The Protestant lay synods were even more right-wing than the church hierarchy, and there was also an important group of Protestant theologians who preached *völkisch* ideology and anti-semitism. In Conway's opinion, it was above all the longing for a strong leader and for a national revival along authoritarian lines which made the rise of National Socialism possible, especially in the Protestant parts of Germany. The volume provides food for thought and will be welcome to students and many others interested in the rise of a fascist mass movement.



# Berlin to Broadway

Patrick O'Connor

DOUGLAS JARMAN

Kurt Weill  
100pp. Orbis. £12.50.  
0 85613 326 4

Kurt Weill's career falls into three quite separate sections which, as Douglas Jarmann points out, seem at first to have no connection. His early years, as a student of Busoni, which produced the Violin Concerto and the First Symphony; the "famous" years, with the music-theatre pieces written in collaboration with Brecht, the Second Symphony and the opera *Die Bürgschaft*; lastly the American period during which Weill seemed completely to abandon his former ideals and turned to writing musicals in the manner of Gershwin or Porter. The one obvious link between these three periods is the fact that during his fifty years Weill enjoyed almost uninterrupted success.

For such a short book as *Kurt Weill* an overlong chapter entitled "Weill's Berlin" sets the scene for the non-specialist reader at whom the book is aimed; Stefan Zweig, Max Reinhardt and all the usual characters are trotted out, but without conjuring up any new images or defining the great excitement and possibilities of the era 1926-33. (In a much shorter account of Berlin in the 1920s, Claudio Arrau in the recently published *Conversations with Arrau* succeeds brilliantly in conveying the artistic strengths of Weinmar Berlin.)

Rather than this retelling of history some more detailed account of Weill's collaborators would have been in order; Lion Feuchtwanger, Caspar Neher and Georg Kaiser, for example. More pertinent still would have been an examination of the performers for whom Weill wrote. Although he always had Lotte Lenya's voice at the back of his mind, she only in fact became a part of his life after his escape from Germany in 1933. The book's music-theatre pieces Weill composed (the *Mahagonny* songspiel, *Die Dreigroschenoper*, *The Seven Deadly Sins*, *The Eternal Road* and the ill-fated *Firebrand of Florence*). One of the difficulties of performing Weill's music today lies in finding a balance between what he wrote and the performing style that Lenya established after his death; she invented her own way of singing but most of those who have followed have fallen into the trap of imitating, not her interpretative example but her limitations. Much is made by writers and musicologists of Lenya's legacy and the distortion of the music by the necessity of transposing it. What is more important, however, is that she was a performer in our own time recording the music which Weill wrote for her: it is as if one could hear a singer of Mozart's time, phrase the music as it would have been heard in 1790. One needs only to listen to gramophone records made in the 1920s by the artists of the Berlin musical stage to recognize the accuracy of Lenya's style; the problem in performing this music now is not just to restore the original keys but to learn from Weill's greatest interpreter not how it shouldn't be done (ie, not too much *Sprechgesang*) but how it should.

Although Jarmann's account is admirable in describing Weill's career and consistently fitting in the political background, *Kurt Weill* is short on popular music. The second yearbook edited by Richard Middleton and David Horn is devoted to "Theory and Method" (341pp. Cambridge University Press. £22. £18 to institutions. ISSN 0261-1430). It opens with a collection of essays by musicologists from Britain, Canada and the USSR, the on subjects ranging from Africa to Adorno. The essays are followed by the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* and a batch of books about John Cage, followed by further short reviews of books and recordings on and of jazz, popular music, Le Blues Moderne, as well as accounts of popular music bibliographies. There is also an annotated bibliography of books on popular music published in 1980.

more personal detail - one needs some of the vulgarity of a popular biography and the humanity of Weill's music. This is the third study of Kurt Weill in as many years. It falls somewhere between Kim Kowalk's minutely annotated thesis *Kurt Weill in Europe* and Ronald Sanders's *The Days Grow Short*. Sanders's book is a decent theatrical biography; it tells the story of each opera and has suitable surrounding anecdotes. Where it falls apart is in Sanders's insistence upon showing that the Broadway Weill was in some way a fulfilment of an artistic destiny; to bend the story of this theory he has to throw out a lot of Weill's most important work and dismiss it as "backward glances". Jarmann goes straight to the point here: "To most admirers of Weill's European works, his output during the last fifteen years of his life comes as a profound shock." But he has his own theory, which, although possibly a bit too neat, is certainly more plausible. He shows that, using the idiom of the Broadway musical, Weill did continue his search for works that dealt with social and moral problems. It is no reflection on his integrity as a composer that of the ten pieces he wrote during his American years, it is only the exceptions to this case that have been at all well known until recently - *Lady in the Dark* and *One Touch of Venus* - and only the former has been heard outside America.

Weill's success in re-creating himself as a composer, in absorbing first the style of the Broadway show and then those of blues and folk-oriented tunes so as to make a new American opera (for that is what *Street Scene* and *Lost in the Stars* are), has to be seen in the context of the passionate disillusionment he felt after Hitler: once they reached America, Lotte Lenya said, Weill never spoke a word of German again and would not have any of his old music performed. His first American composition, *Johnny Johnson*, did utilize passages from *Happy End* and some of his Parisian songs, but as early as this (1936) he understood - as most composers of traditional American music, in numbers like "Aggie's sewing-machine song" and "Johnny's song" one listens in vain for that particular sound, as if Mahler were being played by a jazz-band, by which one can instantly recognize Weill's European signature.

## The barometer of dzhaz

Eric Hobsbawm

S. FREDERICK STARR

Red and Hot: The Fate of Jazz in the Soviet Union 1917-1980  
368pp. Oxford University Press.  
£12.50.  
0 19 53163 6

The diffusion and naturalization of the North American Negro music, which has become the universal idiom of youth, is easy to trace, since it had initially no native roots whatever in the receiving countries. It is also extremely well documented, partly because it acquired a brand-name ("jazz") which gave it high literary visibility, but mainly because the impassioned and articulate admirers of the music have written an enormous amount of information about it on both sides of the Atlantic. Some of them are even professional historians; though most of subjects remote from jazz, it is therefore surprising that there has been little good socio-cultural history of its global triumph.

S. Frederick Starr, jazz-player, jazz scholar, Russian expert and President of Oberlin College, has filled part of this gap most impressively. His excellent book is clearly a splendid contribution to Soviet history, and, for practically all of us - a very surprising one. Who knew that one of Webern's Synchrotons, of Berlin, in Minn., transformed, with the backing of those "unconcerned" jazz fans Comrades Ponomarev and secretary of the Party, and Abrahamov, into the State Jazz Orchestra of the Russian Soviet Republic of

# Black notes only

John Stokes

ARTHUR TAYLOR

Notes and Tones:  
Musician-to-Musician Interviews  
296pp. Quartet. £11.95.  
0 7043 2365 6

Arthur Taylor is an accomplished drummer who has worked with most of the leading jazz musicians, from Charlie Parker to John Coltrane. Black instrumentalists, he believes, will only open up to each other; and so completely do these interviews with his fellow musicians prove the point that they will leave the average white jazz fan shamed and surprised, shamed at his own surprise. *Notes and Tones* powerfully reflects black consciousness in the late 1960s and early 1970s - a perilous time for all Americans, black or white, and, in retrospect, a period of still unresolved change in Afro-American music.

These musicians speak not of "jazz" but of "the music" or "our" music. Among the twenty-seven artists questioned, there is unanimous agreement that "jazz", originally New Orleans slang for sexual intercourse, is a white man's word, or at least application of a word, "bebop" is a similar instance. Only two months ago Miles Davis was telling Richard Williams in *The Times* that the term was never used by him; he never called it that. White people called it that. What did he call it? "Nothing." Or, as Max Roach says here, "You name it and then you claim it." Language is just one of the ways in which white has laid claim upon black.

It's good that *Notes and Tones* should start with a talk with Davis, because the ensuing conversations show that what are often dismissed as the peccadilloes of a determined individualist are in fact commonly held views. Even with Taylor, Davis opens with an example of his famous "but one", but he soon gets down to basics: music and, closely related, the economics of the industry. This is one of the more coherent interviews that Davis has given, though less in its transitions than in its moments of alert concentration. CBS has just sent him (it was 1968) the music of *Camelot* and

*Dr Doolittle*. Not surprisingly, for a man who gives his main hobby as "laughing at white folks on television", Davis was unmoved.

Taylor asks for memories of Charlie Parker and Bud Powell and is given unstinting tributes to their qualities as men and as musicians. Rhythm and blues gains general favour because of its black roots, though the Beatles are widely mistrusted. "Free jazz" is much more controversial, otherwise the keen appreciation that these performers



Charles Stewart, reproduced from *Dizzy Gillespie's To Be Or Not To Be*, display for each other makes their dislike of critical categorization easier to comprehend.

The names of two non-musicians - Malcolm X and Muhammad Ali - are repeatedly cited, not always uncritically but never without intense personal identification. The same goes for the Black Panthers. Carleen McRae tells how she played a benefit for Panthers in July, while Freddie Hubbard, a superb technician who now divides his time between recitals of the Davis quintet of the mid-1960s and

new-disco music, was, in 1971, insisting that "revolution is going to the United States", and protesting against battle between Panther police when Eldridge Cleaver fled from Algeria. There is a frightening language in this book, words like "genocide" and "storm-trooper" and "concentration camp". The troops are the Los Angeles police, but it's not easy to see whether the "camps" are a metaphor for urban ghettos or whether they signify belief in something menacing. The urgent message is that the musicians have to assume control of the publishing, recording, management industries if they are to survive in America. It was, we're reminded, a time when Henry Gurley's "Motown" record business seemed to show the way forward. For some (Randy Nave, Nina Simone, Hazel Scott), however, the others (Max Roach, Art Blakey) familiarization with African music equally vital.

The final conversation circles back upon the first. Betty Carter, a wonderfully inventive singer whose performance, phrases like a dancer, and gestures like a mime. In conversation, she reveals solid ground underlying her scorn of the commercial dance which she believes to be drawing the Davis towards ruin. Her own song has been to find a small record of her own. Still in business even products can be hard to find in

It was the succinct and incisive Davis, though, who once remarked (Kenneth Tynan) that "when you ask you do something all you can do is no". In the decade since he conducted these interviews, he has radical elements of black power faded (some say have been systematically destroyed). Davis has been in retreat through ill health, recently to return with a synthesis of past and present. Free jazz has flourished more in Europe than in America, where waves are punned by jazz-junk and other hybrids. Jazz is a particularly unwise word, who, having read *Notes and Tones*, drew easy connections between the developments. Opportunities can be provided by the sequel to Taylor now plans.

with a state which, politically and ideologically, stood at the opposite pole from the USSR and has since been its main adversary: the US. Jazz and jazz (in the broad sense which for Starr also includes music) are therefore more than an international idiom of popular culture which happens to define the US, as a seceder and top-hat nation to have derived from Britain and culture from Paris. In the USSR the government well knew what it had launched Willis Conover's *Radio Free Music USA* in 1955. Conover, "whether Soviet officials reject jazz, they have always rejected jazz as a serious matter". Only in the Japanese literature of the past 1,000 years - *Waka* poems, novels, the diary, comic works, all of which depend so heavily on association of ideas, metaphors and implied references - he is able to think of Haiku, the three line poems, as typifying the Japanese use of words.

As he neither understood the language nor was familiar with the psychological milieu in which the Japanese communicate or surmise the intentions of others, even in their most ritualized behaviour, it was easy for Barthes to claim approvingly that "the Japanese sign is strong but empty" and Japan an empire of empty signs. Since he does not discuss the core of Japanese literature of the past 1,000 years - *Waka* poems, novels, the diary, comic works, all of which depend so heavily on association of ideas, metaphors and implied references - he is able to think of Haiku, the three line poems, as typifying the Japanese use of words.

The details of Soviet jazz history through the past half-century, and the careers and assessments of the musicians, will probably only interest jazz-lovers. Conover's book, not only a highly original and important contribution to Soviet studies, but also to the social history of contemporary popular culture. It is a pity that the author's knowledge of the culture and development of jazz elsewhere in Europe is sometimes defective, perhaps inevitably so in the present state of the literature. There is a lot for others to emerge from the underground among Soviet jazz scholars. In the meantime the book's authority, but the fact that both the techniques of the modern industrial economy and the cultural patterns increasingly generated in industrialized mass societies, were identified

# The idea of the Orient

Hidé Ishiguro

ROLAND BARTHES

Empire of Signs  
Translated by Richard Howard  
109pp. Cape. £9.95.  
0 224 02946 0

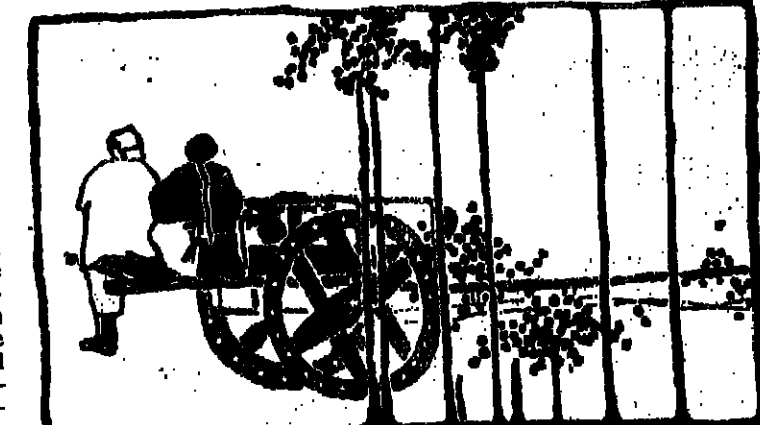
We now have an English translation of *L'Empire des signes*, a book first published in 1970 based on Roland Barthes's observations and impressions of Japan, which he visited for a few weeks in 1966 to give a seminar, and which he was to revisit several times. With his natural appreciation of pleasure, his acute eye for form and detail, Barthes was in a way ideally suited to respond to certain discreet but enduring features of Japanese culture, past and present. We are not presented here with the misleading Western image of disciplined Confucians - an Oriental counterpart of Weber's Protestants, with their work ethic - nor with a stereotyped contrast between an elegant but mysterious tradition and a soulless and vulgar contemporary life. Neither form nor anonymity is felt by Barthes to be something which represses the individual. He is thus able to perceive in the living and eating habits of the Japanese the feature which they call *karashi*; the quality of being uncompromising about one's taste and perfectionist about the details of its expression. The way in which Barthes describes how raw food is prepared or vegetables fried reveals the sympathetic response of a French gourmet, and his refusal to read mystical messages into Haiku poems or stylized puppet-plays shows his refreshing literary sensibility. His description of interpersonal relations in Japan as being free from hidden psychological attributions to which many Japanese themselves ascribe is an expression of his authentic self. His Europeans must have studied at the Sorbonne or with Leo Strauss - at Chicago: they are constantly reading between the lines and putting interpretations on everything they come across. (It must be said that Barthes himself exemplifies this trait when he observes that chopsticks are "maternal".) They do not trust "maternal" and surfaces. It is as if the Oscar Wildes or the Robbe-Grilletes whom Barthes himself championed had never existed. Barthes's Europeans aspire to informality and frankness. "Why in the West is politeness regarded with suspicion?" he asks. He has obviously not witnessed a roomful of people go cold with suspicion in England when a mere acquaintance arrives and proceeds to address people by their first names, slapping them on their backs.

Barthes's Japan is the antipodes. Sometimes the contrasts he draws are based on straightforward mistakes. According to him, Europeans are obsessed with "reality" and "life" and attempt to make fictitious characters seem real. To prove that the Japanese are different he claims that in Japan, when characters are introduced into a story by the equivalent of a formula like "once upon a time", the inanimate form of the verb "to be" is used. This is highly contentious: classical Japanese uses the same verb for animate and inanimate existence. In modern Japanese, this verb is used mainly for inanimate existence although in folktales it has occasionally been used to introduce characters, probably because the stories come from a time when classical Japanese was used.

Other contrasts are based on perceptive observations of Japan, but for which one can easily find equivalents in Europe. In addition, in a few passages, the English translation adds to the baffling nature of the text. Let me give two examples. Barthes asserts that things look miniature in Japan, not so much because of their size but because of their "precision". He explains that this comes, as it were, from the removal of a surfeit of meaning, not from things having a definite outline (as might be thought in Europe): "the thing is not filled in by colour, shade and brush strokes; it's like a line drawing made up of a clear outline of a drawing that is filled in by colour, shade and brush strokes." *Une ligne dessinée d'un contour rempli, la couleur, l'ombre, le toucher.* This para-

truths, is a fantasy world, just like the one in *The Mikado* which the Japanese themselves would not think of as being Japan.

Even the factual mistakes derive less from ignorance about Japan than from Barthes's decision to draw a contrast between things Japanese and things European. His claim that "for us in France, clear soup is a poor soup" is as bizarre as his claim that in Japanese cuisine "nappage", or coating (rather than "blending", as it is translated here) of foodstuffs with sauce, cream or pastry, is unknown. Japanese cooks pride themselves on the ground walnut sauce, fermented soybean and citron paste or sesame cream with which they coat their vegetables, just as a French



"Peasants on a cart", 1913, by Sesshō Tada, from *The Japanese Print since 1900* (140pp. British Museum Publications. £7.95. 0 7141 1424 3).

chef may boast of the transparency of his consommé.

But Barthes's "Occident" is even more of a fantasy world than his Japan, being populated by autonomous Cartesianes, each convinced of having privileged access to his inner self, and whose every speech act and gesture is an expression of his authentic self. His Europeans must have studied at the Sorbonne or with Leo Strauss - at Chicago: they are constantly reading between the lines and putting interpretations on everything they come across. (It must be said that Barthes himself exemplifies this trait when he observes that chopsticks are "maternal".) They do not trust "maternal" and surfaces. It is as if the Oscar Wildes or the Robbe-Grilletes whom Barthes himself championed had never existed. Barthes's Europeans aspire to informality and frankness. "Why in the West is politeness regarded with suspicion?" he asks. He has obviously not witnessed a roomful of people go cold with suspicion in England when a mere acquaintance arrives and proceeds to address people by their first names, slapping them on their backs.

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doxically expressed point becomes nonsense, however, in Richard Howard's rendering, where we read that the thing is not formed of a strong contour, a drawing which would fill out the color, the shadow, the texture". (That the translator, the talented American poet and friend of Barthes, who succeeds in conveying the self-conscious, paradoxical but precise flavour of Barthes's style, should allow such a bewildering sentence to occur, can be explained only by the preparedness of the English-speaking intellectual to accept almost any opaque paradoxism from Barthes.)

My second example is the title of the chapter on Haiku which is translated

"What, then, of Barthes's central idea in *Empire of Signs*: that of empty signs? It is important to realize that what he means by these is not signs without meaning. As someone influenced by Saussure, Barthes would insist that a sign could not be a sign without signifying something; its sense. Thus, when he writes of Haiku "tout en étant intelligible, il ne veut rien dire", this should not be translated as Howard translates it, as "while being quite intelligible, the Haiku means nothing", since to be intelligible is to have meaning. Barthes is here relying on the original sense of the words "il ne veut rien dire" rather than on its idiomatic sense to make his provocative point: Haiku has sense but it does not purport to give a message. We should appreciate the poem by understanding the sense of words, not by seeking for associated meanings, a moral or the intention of the author. (An interesting way of looking at the Haiku of Buson is that to those of Basho although both are cited by Barthes.) The "emptiness" Barthes ascribes to them is not really a property of signs but of the attitude of sign users. Signs, whether in Europe or Asia, derive their sense from the system to which they belong; they do not carry with them all the different messages that different speakers might intend to convey by using them. As analytical philosophers would say, speaker's meaning and word meaning must be distinguished. Barthes thinks that although, in Japan, signs are ubiquitous (not only words but gestures, packages, etc. are signs), they say just what they signify, and nothing

more. Mutual bowing, (which Barthes illustrates by way of sixty-year-old photographs, with people in postures no longer seen), he points out, is devoid of humiliation or vanity, because it is not really a message from one person to another. (Has he really forgotten that similar ceremonies happen in Europe all the time? A man allowing a woman to precede him through a doorway is not expressing his personal awe for the particular person nor does he feel himself humiliated by this conventional act of courtesy.) Barthes, for aesthetic reasons as well as for reasons of mental hygiene, wants to extend this attitude of letting signs speak for themselves rather than interpreting them and reading between the lines with our own baggage of hackneyed ideas and psychological hang-ups. The fact that he has chosen Japan as a society in which such an attitude flourishes, seems to me to be based on his justified irritation at the tendency of Europeans to read mysterious messages into Japanese poems and actions rather than on any real knowledge about the difference between European and Japanese use of signs. He has chosen to ignore the fact that many Japanese share this same tendency. As a result we have Barthes, for whom "nature" and "natural" have tended to be dirty words, expressing his fascination with people whose traditional self-image involves being close to nature and cherishing natural emotive responses. But since a people's self-image is often distorted, it may well be true that Barthes wanted to see in Japan a more to be treasured than the features that the Japanese ascribe to themselves.

What is regrettable is that Barthes not only suggests that emptiness is a property of signs, but compares it to Japanese architecture, he even tries to explain it by reference to the Zen doctrine of emptiness (a doctrine about the non-existence of substances). He thereby falls into a kind of lax analogical thinking - the very kind that he himself so often deplored.

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# American notes

Christopher Hitchens

On the opening page of Franz Kafka's *America*, the Statue of Liberty is depicted as holding not a torch, but a sword. It is not clear whether this is a deliberate mistake or, if it is conscious, what it is intended to signify. The first sentence makes it clear that Karl Rossman ("a poor boy of sixteen who had been packed off to America by his parents because a servant girl had seduced him and got herself with child by him") is in some sense Kafka. The sword in the hand of the statue might be taken, if intentional, as symbolizing justice. Or, if subconscious, it could perhaps be traced to the image of Eden. Kafka, who never crossed the Atlantic, always had a great longing for the New World and seems to have visited it, in his imagination, several times.

For his centennial, the Kafka Society of America and the Austrian Institute of New York have organized a travelling exhibition. It has an impressive and intriguing range. There is a first edition of *The Trial* (of which more later) and an amusing collection of the American reviews of the book in 1937 - its year of United States publication. The *New York Times* spoke of it as "morbid" and as displaying "posthumous vanity". Philip Rahv in *Partisan Review* saw Kafka's allusions to the "austerities of the Old Testament, where terrorism is the single source of divine authority". W. H. Auden called the dilemma of Joseph K. "the predicament of modern man" while *The Nation* referred rather obviously to "spirituality within the bureaucratic labyrinth". In what must now be seen as an understatement, the *New York Herald Tribune* described the book as giving "a foretaste of Nazi justice".

Prefigurations of the Holocaust are, actually, very much present. The visitor sees Kafka's sisters, who were to perish in the ovens. Jizchak Lowy, a famous actor in the Yiddish Theatre whose performances enthralled Kafka and whose conversation aroused his interest in things "Talmudic" and "Hasidic", went to the same fate. There are reproductions of Yiddish Theatre advertisements, usually from the old *Prager Tagblatt*, which serve as a reminder of the world we have lost.

Kafka's formative influences obviously included Charles Dickens, most especially *David Copperfield* whose presence can be felt in the famous letter to his father. But I had not realized, until I spoke with Dr Peter Beichner of the American Kafka Society, how strong had been the pull exerted by the United States. Two

radical writers, Soukup and Holitscher, published separate accounts of their voyages to America in 1910-1911, and both of them caught Kafka's eye. Holitscher was serialized by *Die Neue Rundschau*, which makes several appearances in the exhibition and which introduced Kafka to aspects of modernism and to the work of Thomas Mann and Robert Musil. Holitscher's book was in many ways critical of America, but it celebrated the continent-sized openness and liberty of the country. Kafka's own novel is full of impressions of spaciousness and generosity, for all of which its author must have yearned. It is not a cheerful book, but it is free of claustrophobia.

Max Brod decided to entitle it *America* instead of the author's more melancholy *The Law One*. His influence is everywhere in the exhibition. We see his testament on Kafka's legacy, and his sturdy refusal to carry out the instruction to enact an *auto da fe* with all posthumous manuscripts. It's well argued if a bit circular: Brod simply says that if Kafka had really wanted "a holocaust" of his papers he would not have asked such a devoted admirer to carry out the task.

One person who must be glad of Brod's renunciation is Ms Ilse Esther Hoffe, his ex-secretary and in this matter his legatee. She owns many of the original manuscripts (including that of *The Trial*) and though she has allowed the opening page of the manuscript to be included, she refuses her leave to have it photographed. She is prepared to sell the archive but for a sum which has not, so far, been within the reach of any library or institution.

One of Anthony Powell's characters remarks somewhere that (I quote from memory) he never fills out an insurance form without imagining it being processed by Wallace Stevens, ended up by Aubrey Beardsley and veiled up on the desk of Franz Kafka. He would be more queasy still if he saw the drawing of a torture machine with which Kafka embellished one of his "Letters to Milena". There is a horrid ingenuity to the thing, even as it appears in the catalogue, and it stays on the retina for too long. The exhibition is, unlike Kafka, travelling around America. In December it reaches New York City, where there is to be a Kafka symposium at the meeting of the Modern Languages Association. Dr Beichner, who is professor of German at the University of Maryland, tells me that Jorge Luis Borges will be present; and will give his

opinions. The engagement of his intricacy with Kafka's imagination will take a finer pen than mine to depict, but I'll be there anyway.

\*\*\*  
If America fascinated *Mitteleuropa*, so does *Mitteleuropa* continue to fascinate America. I have a tailpiece to my last month's paragraph about the Lillian Hellman controversy. The dispute about Ms Hellman's veracity turns, in part if not in whole, on the figure of Julia in her memoirs, who, we are led to understand, is drawn from life. A variety of reasons is given for not actually naming her. But the chief characteristics are well enough marked. She is American; she has substantial means of her own; she is drawn to Vienna by the prospect of being personally analysed by Freud and she becomes consecrated to the radical anti-Nazi resistance.

There are, obviously, very few people with whom such an individual can or could be confused. Muriel Gardiner has, on the face of it, the best extant claim to the title. Her book, *Code Name Mary: Memoirs of an American Woman in the Austrian Underground* may have one of the most cumbersome titles since "Closely Observed Trains". But it can, at crucial points and in important ways, be authenticated.

The first and the main consideration is this. No witness living, and no memoirs that endure, have any record or hint of any figure resembling the obviously conspicuous Julia. Except for Muriel Gardiner, who has been repeatedly disowned by Ms Hellman as her original, there's no trace of another American radical female in the Austria of the time. More than that, Muriel Gardiner's personal story was well known to all those who had had anything to do with the Austrian resistance. She is married to Joseph Buttinger, former leader of the Austrian left socialists and she still lives with him in New Jersey. She is well known to Dr Herbert Steiner, the director of the archives of the Austrian resistance, who says that she has no analogue. Her history, both individual and political, was and is familiar to the group who survived that period. Among her friends was the late Wolf Schwabecker, who was a co-owner of her country home. He was, among other things, one of Lillian Hellman's

lawyers. Asked if she had ever spoken to him about the old days of Muriel Gardiner in Vienna, Ms Hellman rejoined, "Certainly not". The suggestion of self-evidence in that reply is not, to put it carefully, in balance with its vehemence. Why not? Why "certainly not"?

The timing of Ms Gardiner's book is fortuitous, but it does add point to the argument between Lillian Hellman and Mary McCarthy. That argument, however much it is occluded by the considerations of personality and loyalty, is basically about history. It may not seem to matter all that much whether Ms Hellman borrowed "Julia", invented her or wrote about her once and now cannot find her again. But, given the way that we all still live in the shadow of that period, exactitude about its history must matter a little. If we can't "find what occurred at Linz" we can still surely hope, with the two chief protagonists still living, to find out about "Julia".

[A letter from Sir Stephen Spender on this matter appears on the facing page.]

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In order for it to be worth reading at this stage of the game, a book about the sexes in America must meet all or most of the following qualifications. It must be original (not just novel). It must have a bit of wit. It must respect, though it need not revere, elementary biology. It must not be snobbish about popular culture, which is where many of the most sensitive registers are located. It must not content itself with being iconoclastic about role-playing, housework and orgasm. It should at least try to make a suggestion or two. Barbara Ehrenreich's *The Hearts of Men* (Doubleday Anchor, \$13.95) is by those standards a very good book. It is both audacious and reflective. It is an attempt to reconsider recent social history in terms of "the flight from commitment". Ms Ehrenreich proposes that the original attempt to escape from commitment, family and routine was made by males, and that in making this point, which comes as a shock only because we realize that we knew it already, she puts off balance both the religious conservatives (who are dire about "the breakdown of the

family") and that class of feminists who see marriage and reproduction as a cruel trap.

The most absorbing section of the book is the sociology and literature of 1950s and early 1960s. By scrutinizing David Riesman's *The Lonely Crowd* and William Whyte's *The Lonely Crowd* and the now-forgotten articles about white collar discontent with a respectable and predictable life, the mass delinquencies of a later period seem inevitable. By making elements of two further sensors - the "Phantom" and the early novels of Philip Roth - she shows how men came to resent and to suspect the idea of wedlock. (There's a good reason for the sinister implications of his institution.)

Time has, if anything, accentuated the "single" culture. Now, for instance, that homosexuality is far more open and acknowledged than heretofore, it is paradoxically harder to stigmatize an unmarried man with the suspicious label of "queer". Finally, the increased awareness of stress and anxiety leading to an enormous fear of the life male cardiac crisis, has led many to conclude that career ambition and family cares are just too much to combine. Ms Ehrenreich is incisive about the new tyranny of cardiologists, and its accompanying narcissistic emphasis on health exercise and the cult of the personality.

We have seen the instability - the indignity - of the bond between man's earnings and a woman's dependence. We cannot go back to a world where maturity meant "settling", often in total desperation, for a life perceived as "role". Nor can we accept the nightmare anomie of the psychologists' vision: a world where other people are objects of consumption, or the due encounters of a "self" propelled impulse alone.

*The Hearts of Men* has been talked about a lot in my hearing. It is one of the best books written about men by a woman that I can think of. In mentioning it because in a few years I suspect that it may be recalled as a small but significant turning-point.

## Dramatism and Logology

Sir, - Please let me state my great gratitude for the generous allotment of space to "Reasons for Reading Kenneth Burke" (July 8). And I am most grateful to Robert M. Adams for his attention and friendliness, though I wish he hadn't found so much to forgive. But his review contains one error of fact. Referring to my theory of language which I "first called 'dramatism' and then baptised 'logology'", Adams says that "both these terms are Burkean coinages". I did give to "dramatism" the specific meaning it has in Webster's *Third New International Dictionary*. "A technique of analysis of language and of thought as basically a mode of action rather than a means of conveying information". But for "logology" the *OED* records two eighteenth-century theological usages, "the doctrine of the Logos" (referring to Christ as "the Word" in the Book of John), and though "rare", as early as 1820 there is a secular meaning, "the science of words", synonymous with "philology". (I confess at first I did think that I had invented the term.)

This might be the place to explain why two terms for the one theory. Though my aim is to be secular and empirical, "dramatism" and "logology" are analogous respectively to the traditional distinction (in theology and metaphysics) between ontology and epistemology. My "Dramatism" article (in *The International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*) features what we humans are (the symbol-using animal). Logology is rooted in the range and quality of knowledge that we acquire when our bodies (physiological organisms) in the realm of non-symbolic motion come to profit by their peculiar aptitude for learning the arbitrary, conventional mediums of communication called "natural" languages (atop which all sorts of specialized nomenclatures are developed, each with its particular kind of insights).

Logology entered as a necessary term in connection with my work "on words and the Word" in *The Rhetoric of Religion*. And I am happy that Mr Adams was kind to it. There my pages on St Augustine's conversion from "word merchant" as a teacher of pagan rhetoric to his ecclesiastical role as a Preacher of the Christian Word get me to the centre of the distinction between the "creativity" of God's verbal *flatus* in the first chapter of Genesis and the fact that any new verbal distinction, if but by virtue of its novelty, is to that extent "creative". Here the two definitions of "logology" (the theological Word of the eighteenth century and the secular words of 1820) are by analogy one.

In his *Biographia Literaria* (the last footnote of Chapter IV) Coleridge observes that "When two distinct meanings are confounded under one or more words... men of research... having discovered the difference [may] remove the equivocation, either by the substitution of a new word or by the appropriation of one of the two or more words, that had before been used promiscuously." And "When this distinction has been so naturalized that of such general currency that the language itself does as it were think for us... we then say that it is evident to common sense. Common sense, therefore, differs in different ages, and among the most notable of Coleridge's many notable footnotes.)

If I bump my head on a cupboard door I may call it an accident, because that is a very rough human way of pointing to my sense of its unpredictability. But obviously there are thousands of interlocking reasons why I should have bumped it at one spot, from a particular direction, at a particular moment when some of my millions of neurons were behaving (or misbehaving) in a certain way. How much more must this be so in the case of, say, the "natural selection" of a frog or the "down of consciousness" of Men or the "dawn of erudition" of Darwin's discoverer DNA and eradicate Darwin's weaker side by the laws of heredity, and yet when the generalization about evolution they still resort to inept nineteenth-century talk about "built-in" development.

May I use your columns to ask any physicist, astrophysicist or biologist who accepts this "accidental" view of the universe to explain exactly what chance or accident is? Filled as I am with admiration and wonder at the mathematical precision of modern physics and genetics, from the Big Bang to a single virus or atom, I find a man of purely literary education, that many scientists still seem unable to

distinguish between everyday metaphors, many of which they use uncritically, and accurate statements. The more impressed one is by the unmistakable intelligence and logic of science, the more odd it seems that its apologists can use words in ways that are totally misleading.

I hope no one will answer that "accident" and "chance" are principles derived from experiments in quantum physics (or heredity) itself - as if, at the heart of it all, there were a kind of invisible goblin, inability to predict in certain situations cannot make the behaviour of "states of excitation" (particles) random (whatever that means). The "paradoxes" that now form part of the body of physics are surely not written off as mathematically insoluble.

The way these loose words are sometimes employed seems all the more sloppy when one considers the momentous contexts in which they appear. To a critical reader it seems certain that they must reflect mental slackness, evasion, ignorance - if not deliberate obfuscation - and are of breed quite other than the language of "natural philosophy". "Chance", says Hume (*Treatise of Human Nature*, 1.11), "is nothing real in itself, and the negation of a cause... Chance can only destroy this [ie. causal] determination of the thought, and leave the mind in its native situation of indifference." He goes on to show that such a "perfect and total indifference" explains nothing, since everything, being subject to a "superior combination of chances", must at least obey the laws of probability. I quote this not as having any finality, but only to indicate one way in which thinking about the problem might well begin. But it must not be a matter of filling cracks in stone with loose plaster!

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## Lillian Hellman

Sir, - Christopher Hitchens (American Notes, July 15) is totally misinformed, apparently by Lillian Hellman, concerning her legal action against Mary McCarthy, if she claims that I "bore a message saying that an apology or a retraction would do to such brief from Miss Hellman or anyone representing her. Indeed I have not seen such many years before these events. It is regrettable, in view of the doubts as to Miss Hellman's veracity, to which Mr Hitchens refers, that he did not check these facts with me. Such an invention could, so easily, have been issued only to further Miss Hellman's case against Mary McCarthy. (See also Christopher Hitchens' "American Notes" on p88.)

STEPHEN SPENDER,  
15 Loudoun Road, London NW8.

## The Nature of Chance

Sir, - In reading in your issue of July 29 the excellent reviews by Brian Pippard of Paul Davies's *God and the New Physics* and by D. J. Bohm of Heinz R. Pagels's *The Cosmic Code*, I am once again, as often before, astonished by the use made of the "vague and mysterious words" of "chance" and "accident". Even so, like your reviewers, who are fully aware that "there is nothing that is not the outcome of the meaning of a message", still talk blandly as if the alternative theory, that everything happens "by chance", is in itself perfectly rational and allowable.

If I bump my head on a cupboard door I may call it an accident, because that is a very rough human way of pointing to my sense of its unpredictability. But obviously there are thousands of interlocking reasons why I should have bumped it at one spot, from a particular direction, at a particular moment when some of my millions of neurons were behaving (or misbehaving) in a certain way. How much more must this be so in the case of, say, the "natural selection" of a frog or the "down of consciousness" of Men or the "dawn of erudition" of Darwin's discoverer DNA and eradicate Darwin's weaker side by the laws of heredity, and yet when the generalization about evolution they still resort to inept nineteenth-century talk about "built-in" development.

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I hope no one will answer that "accident" and "chance" are principles derived from experiments in quantum physics (or heredity) itself - as if, at the heart of it all, there were a kind of invisible goblin, inability to predict in certain situations cannot make the behaviour of "states of excitation" (particles) random (whatever that means). The "paradoxes" that now form part of the body of physics are surely not written off as mathematically insoluble.

The way these loose words are sometimes employed seems all the more sloppy when one considers the momentous contexts in which they appear. To a critical reader it seems certain that they must reflect mental slackness, evasion, ignorance - if not deliberate obfuscation - and are of breed quite other than the language of "natural philosophy". "Chance", says Hume (*Treatise of Human Nature*, 1.11), "is nothing real in itself, and the negation of a cause... Chance can only destroy this [ie. causal] determination of the thought, and leave the mind in its native situation of indifference." He goes on to show that such a "perfect and total indifference" explains nothing, since everything, being subject to a "superior combination of chances", must at least obey the laws of probability. I quote this not as having any finality, but only to indicate one way in which thinking about the problem might well begin. But it must not be a matter of filling cracks in stone with loose plaster!

FRANK GOODRIDGE,  
Department of English Literature,  
University of Lancaster.

154 Amity Road, Andover, New Jersey 07821.

epistemology suggest a perspective along these lines: Surrounding us wordly animals there is the infinite wordless universe out of which we have been gradually carving our universes of discourse since the time when our primordial ancestors added to their sensations words for sensations. When they could duplicate the taste of an orange, by saying "the taste of an orange", that's when STORY was born since words tell about sensations. Whereas Nature can do no wrong (whatever it does is Nature) when STORY comes into the world there enters the realm of the true, false, honest, mistaken, the downright lie, the imaginative, the visionary, the sublime, the ridiculous, the eschatological (as with Hell, Purgatory, Heaven); the Transmigration of Souls; Foretellings of an Inevitable wind-up in a classless society; the satirical, every single detail of every single science or speculation, even every bit of gossip - for although all animals in their way communicate, only our kind of animal can gossip. There was no story before we came, and when we're gone the universe will go on sans story.

KENNETH BURKE,  
154 Amity Road, Andover, New Jersey 07821.

This might be the place to explain why two terms for the one theory. Though my aim is to be secular and empirical, "dramatism" and "logology" are analogous respectively to the traditional distinction (in theology and metaphysics) between ontology and epistemology. My "Dramatism" article (in *The International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*) features what we humans are (the symbol-using animal). Logology is rooted in the range and quality of knowledge that we acquire when our bodies (physiological organisms) in the realm of non-symbolic motion come to profit by their peculiar aptitude for learning the arbitrary, conventional mediums of communication called "natural" languages (atop which all sorts of specialized nomenclatures are developed, each with its particular kind of insights).

Logology entered as a necessary term in connection with my work "on words and the Word" in *The Rhetoric of Religion*. And I am happy that Mr Adams was kind to it. There my pages on St Augustine's conversion from "word merchant" as a teacher of pagan rhetoric to his ecclesiastical role as a Preacher of the Christian Word get me to the centre of the distinction between the "creativity" of God's verbal *flatus* in the first chapter of Genesis and the fact that any new verbal distinction, if but by virtue of its novelty, is to that extent "creative". Here the two definitions of "logology" (the theological Word of the eighteenth century and the secular words of 1820) are by analogy one.

In his *Biographia Literaria* (the last footnote of Chapter IV) Coleridge observes that "When two distinct meanings are confounded under one or more words... men of research... having discovered the difference [may] remove the equivocation, either by the substitution of a new word or by the appropriation of one of the two or more words, that had before been used promiscuously." And "When this distinction has been so naturalized that of such general currency that the language itself does as it were think for us... we then say that it is evident to common sense. Common sense, therefore, differs in different ages, and among the most notable of Coleridge's many notable footnotes.)

If I bump my head on a cupboard door I may call it an accident, because that is a very rough human way of pointing to my sense of its unpredictability. But obviously there are thousands of interlocking reasons why I should have bumped it at one spot, from a particular direction, at a particular moment when some of my millions of neurons were behaving (or misbehaving) in a certain way. How much more must this be so in the case of, say, the "natural selection" of a frog or the "down of consciousness" of Men or the "dawn of erudition" of Darwin's discoverer DNA and eradicate Darwin's weaker side by the laws of heredity, and yet when the generalization about evolution they still resort to inept nineteenth-century talk about "built-in" development.

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FRANK GOODRIDGE,  
Department of English Literature,  
University of Lancaster.

154 Amity Road, Andover, New Jersey 07821.

## Family, Marriage and Death

Sir, - Margaret Alexiou in her review (July 15) does not give a balanced account of Sally Humphreys's *The Family, Marriage and Death*. From her own point of view, of course, some of the charges she makes against Mrs Humphreys might seem serious: lack of reference to the engaging but outdated and unconvincing Marxist depiction of Athenian society by Mrs Alexiou's father, George Thomson; failure to draw attention to modern Greek practices which in many cases two thousand years of time and Christianity have rendered substantially different from the distant classical precedents; absence of discussion of the relation of kinship group (*genos*) to *oikos* ("extended family", including slaves), even though Mrs Humphreys's topic is the far more significant distinction between *oikos* and *polis* (state).

But it is particularly unjust to characterize Mrs Humphreys as having "ransacked the tombs of classical Athens in deadening detail" only to draw negative conclusions, when in fact both Mrs Humphreys's findings and methodology are of the greatest interest, since they show, in a model demonstration of how the sub-disciplines of epigraphy and archaeology can be combined, that families did care about one another, and increasingly so after the Peloponnesian War - a conclusion, because it is based on stones and bones rather than on speculation, which provides a useful reminder not to take too seriously the psychologizing classicists who contend that Athens lost the war with Sparta partly because misogyny was destroying the fabric of her society.

A number of the essays in the book quite consciously represent work "in progress". Mrs Humphreys hesitates to draw conclusions before all the available data can be collected; there are also a number of silly misprints and other signs of haste. But that does not prove that Mrs Humphreys is unscholarly, or that the book, even though its format prevents it from presenting a sustained argument, does not contain much of interest and use to students of the ancient world.

MARY LEFKOWITZ,  
Departments of Greek and Latin,  
Wellesley College, Wellesley, Massachusetts 02181.

## Past and Present

Sir, - We notice that in his comments on *Past and Present* (August 5) J. P. Kenyon makes no reference to the friendly and constructively critical article contained in No 100 of the journal by the distinguished French historian, Jacques Le Goff. Le Goff's assessment of *Past and Present* is such that readers of Kenyon's piece would not recognize that the two writers were discussing the same journal.

We would also like to draw your readers' attention to a comment in the review pages of *Annals E.S.C.*, January-February 1983: "It is interesting to find [in this book] the tone and the spirit which are characteristic of a journal which, both in regard to its devotion to research and to the rigour of debate, is of remarkable quality. There is no *Past and Present* school" - and so much the better - but there is a vitality, an openness and a serious quality of scholarly debate which unfortunately no longer to be found in French language journals" (review by J-P. Genet of *Pensées, Knights and Heretics*, a collection of articles first published in *Past and Present*).

R. H. HILTON,  
Chairman of the Editorial Board,  
*Past and Present*.

T. H. ASTON,  
Editor, *Past and Present*,  
School of History, University of Birmingham.

## Walter Scott

Sir, - I have been authorized by my Press Committee to investigate the feasibility of undertaking a critical edition of the novels and related fiction of Scott. To this end a working party has met, under the chairmanship of Dr T. L. Johnston, and its initial soundings have produced an encouraging response. I shall be writing to appropriate bodies and scholars, but on behalf of the working party will welcome worldwide expressions of interest and advice.

ARCHIE TURNBULL,  
Edinburgh University Press,  
George Square, Edinburgh.

sympathetic leaps, and exercise the intuitive insights, required to write better history. If true, one can only regret their inability to use John Keats's negative capability and still function.

ELMER L. BECKER,  
Department of Pathology, University of Connecticut, Farmington, Connecticut 06032.

## The SPD in Exile

Sir, - I am sorry that your correspondent J. W. Bruegel (Letters, July 29) found my book *Exile Politics during the Second World War* disappointing. But he really does not appear to have read it very carefully. He might be less disappointed if he had.

There was contact between the Labour Party and the SPD in exile before the exiles came to London, both bipartisan and through the Socialist Workers' International. That is why Labour gave the SPD cash before 1941 and why it both invited and then arranged for its exiled leaders to come to England. Bruegel is simply wrong to say "there was hardly any contact" between Labour and the SPD. His assertion that "for Gillies the SPD refugees were a human not a political problem is contradicted by the evidence in my book. Why does Bruegel think Gillies took Vogel if not for a political purpose? And why should the SPD's leaders' visas have been asked for by the Ministry for Economic Warfare, giving, as its reason, the fact that it was "keen to get these men to the UK... as they are needed for a special purpose" if that purpose was purely humane? Labour's attitude towards the SPD both then and throughout the war was wholly political and it is absurd to think otherwise.

Furthermore, the Foreign Office did consider the use of exiles from Germany as a shadow German government, although this notion was then rejected for reasons which I make clear. I do go to some lengths to try to explain why (unsatisfactory) views were so powerful within the Foreign Office and, more surprisingly, within the Labour Party and I do adduce a number of explanations as to why they seemed impossible to resist. Finally, if Bruegel could bear to return to my study for just a little while, and look in particular at the third part of it (pp 187-247) he would see that he is totally incorrect in stating that I ignore the Soviet dimension and its impact on British and SPD policy. Indeed, any truly dispassionate reader would agree that this constitutes one of the main themes of my book.

The problems I explore in *Exile Politics* are surely complex and my own interpretations of them may not be to everyone's taste, especially when, as in Bruegel's own case, they were personally caught up in them. But I do provide the evidence on which those interpretations are based. To suggest that I fail to offer chapter and verse and provide only "glaring mistakes and misunderstandings" might be seen as a very shoddy response to what I hope is a carefully considered, if certainly controversial study.

ANTHONY GLEES,  
Department of Government, Brunel University, Uxbridge, Middlesex.

## Noto

Sir, - Two separate devils seem to have got into the works of my review (July 8) of Stephen Tobrin's book *Noto*. The first malevolently transposed 1693 into 1963; the second, kinder, but not well informed, "improved" 1963 into 1763 and therefore moved the business of the seventeenth-century printshops forward to the eighteenth.

I was abraded when the proof came and therefore could not undo their tricks. For this I apologize to you, your readers and Mr Tobrin.

JOSEPH RYKWERD,  
264 Wedderburn Road, London NW3.

## Among this week's contributors

ALAN BROWNJOHN is Chairman of the Poetry Society's General Council. His collection of poems, *A Night in the Garbo*, was published in 1981.

LORD CAMERON was Chief of the Air Staff from 1976-77.

F. L. CARSTEN's *Britain and the Wetmar Republic: the British Documents* will be published next year.

RICHARD CLOAG is the author of *A Short History of Modern Greece*, 1979.

SIR BARNETT COCKS's books include *The European Parliament*, 1973.

PENELOPE J. CORFIELD is the author of *The Impact of English Towns, 1700-1800*, 1982.

GORDON A. CRAIG's *Germany 1866-1945* was published in 1978.

MAURICE CRAIG's books include *The Architecture of Ireland: from the earliest times to 1800*, 1982.

KEVIN CROSSLEY-HOLLAND's collections of poems include *The Rain Giver*, 1973.

DICK DAVIS's collection of poems, *Seeing the World*, was published in 1980.

GAVIN EWART's most recent collection of poems, *More Little Ones*, was published earlier this year.

KYLL FITZLYON is the author of *Before the Revolution*, 1978.

DAVID FREEDBERG's *Dutch Landscape: the Seventeenth Century* was published in 1981.

DAVID FANNICK is a barrister and a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford.

PETER HEDBLETHWAITE's most recent book is *Introducing John Paul II, the Populist Pope*, 1982.

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS is Washington correspondent for *The Nation*.

ERIC HORSBAYN's books include *Revolutionaries*, 1973, and *The Age of Capital*, 1975.

ROBERT IRWIN's book *The Mamluk Sultanate 1250-1517* will be published shortly.

HIDE ISHIGURO is Professor of Philosophy at Barnard College, Columbia University.

DAVID KELLEY is a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge.

ALASTAIR LAING is co-author with Anthony Blunt, of *Baroque and Rococo: Architecture and Decoration*, 1978.

PETER







charismatic personality of its leader (and founder), Andreas Papandreu, and in the way in which he has used his unchallenged control over the party to promote the interests of his immediate family (his son, son-in-law and American wife all have important posts in the government or party) or old cronies.

The Grothusen volume will long remain an indispensable tool for the serious student of contemporary Greece. Yet most readers will require a greater feel for what makes Greece tick, or fail to tick, as the case may be, a greater sense of the quite astonishing rate of social and economic change that has characterized the past three decades, together with a fuller understanding of the cultural and institutional constraints against modernization, from books such as Nicos Mouzeli's *Modern Greece: Faces of Underdevelopment* (1978) and W. H. McNeill's *The Metamorphosis of Greece since World War II* (1978).

One of the most potent aspects of Papandreu's electoral appeal has been his promise to break the cycle of dependency that has characterized external relations since the emergence of the Greek state. Inevitably, relations with the United States, which in 1947 assumed from Great Britain the mantle of Greece's principal external patron, have loomed very large since the election, and the tortuous negotiations over the future of the American bases have only just ended. The visceral anti-Americanism of many Greeks across the political spectrum is not always easy for the outsider to comprehend. For this reason Theodore A. Couloumbis and John O. Iatrides, *Greek American Relations: A Critical Review* is a useful account of this critical relationship in the post-war world. American insensitivity to Greek aspirations – Lyndon Johnson once told the Greek ambassador in Washington that Greece was a flea on the arse of an elephant (the United States) – culminating in their support of the crash dictatorship of the Colonels, goes a long way towards explaining the upsurge of anti-American feeling after the downfall of the military régime in 1974.

An interesting development during the past ten years has been the emergence of the so-called "Greek lobby" in the United States Congress. This appears not to have resulted from electoral pressure exerted by Americans of Greek descent (num-

bering perhaps as many as a million and a quarter) as these for the most part are not compactly settled. Rather the power, such as it is, of the Greek lobby results from the rise to positions of considerable political influence of a significant number of Greek-Americans (besides Spiro Agnew), in itself a reflection of the growing affluence and astonishing level of achievement of the Greek-American community.

Charles Moskos's *Greek Americans: Struggle and Success* admirably complements Theodore Saloutos's magisterial *Greeks in the United States* (1964) and is particularly useful in documenting the consequences of the second great migration of Greeks to the United States after the ending of the quota system in 1953 (the first was between 1890 and 1912). Between 1966 and 1971, some 15,000 Greeks entered the country annually. As befits a sociologist, Moskos is particularly interesting on social mobility and its political consequences. It is salutary to be reminded that not only was it a Greek-American (Nick the Greek) who played for the biggest pot in the history of stud poker (\$797,000) but also that it was another, Dr George Papanicolaou, the centenary of whose birth is being marked this year, who has been responsible for saving the lives of women in their tens of thousands through the "Pap smear". No doubt Moskos is right in saying that Greek-Americans have yet to make their mark on sport, although surprisingly he makes no mention of the baseball superstar Micky Mantle (Mantolopoulos).

Moskos claims that Astoria in the Borough of Queens in New York, with 60,000–70,000 Greeks, is the largest Greek settlement outside Greece or Cyprus. But strong contenders for this title must surely be London, with its huge Greek Cypriot community, whose structure and particularly whose politics have not yet been adequately studied, and Melbourne in Australia.

Greeks, after Italians, now constitute the second largest non-English-speaking migrant group in Australia. Between 1947 and 1966 almost 150,000 Greek migrants entered the country, a very significant element in that massive influx of South Europeans that has helped undermine the tradition of Anglo-conformity. To the pioneering study *Greeks in Australia* (1975), edited by Charles Price, has been added more recently Gillian Bottomley's *After the Odyssey: A Study of Greek Australians*, which focuses on a sample of second-

generation migrants in Sydney. It is interesting to note that early Greek migrants to Australia encountered the same kinds of prejudice that greeted their compatriots in the United States. The recommendation of a Royal Commissioner appointed by the Queensland government in the 1930s that Greek migration be absolutely prohibited, on the ground that the Greeks constitute "a menace to the community in which they settled", calls to mind the denunciation by Utah newspapers during the First World War of Greeks as the "scum of Europe". Ms Bottomley's book is full of fascinating insights into the mores of the present community. We learn, for instance, that the going rate for the dowry of a girl wishing to marry a doctor or barrister even in 1971 was Australian \$20,000.

The history of the Greek diaspora in modern times has barely begun to be written and whole areas of its historical experience the modern Greeks await their chronicler, notably the history of that very large majority of Greeks that remained under Ottoman rule after the emergence of the independent state in the 1830s, not to mention the study of minorities within Greece itself: Turks, Slavophones, Vlachs, Catholics and Jews. A welcome recent contribution in this last direction is Marc D. Angel's *The Jews of Rhodes: The History of a Sephardic Community*, a community like those elsewhere in Greece that was virtually wiped out during the occupation.

If great lacunae remain, none the less within Greece itself historical research is undergoing a major

**C. M. WOODHOUSE**  
*Karamanlis: The Restorer of Greek Democracy*  
298pp. Oxford University Press.  
£19.50.  
0 19 8225849

**THANOS VEREMIS AND ODYSSEAS DIMITRAKOPOULOS (Editors)**  
*Metallata gyro apo ton Venizelo kai tin epokhi tou*  
720pp. Athens: Ekdoiseis Philippoti.

**KLAUS-DETLEV GROTHUSEN and others (Editors)**  
*Skidostourapa-Handbuch: Band III, Griechenland*  
770pp. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, DM 210.  
3 525 36202 1

transformation. Many of the older generation of historians, and not a few of the younger, remain obsessed with the publication of "mekhthi engraphia", or unpublished documents, but recent years have seen the publication of a number of important works of synthesis and a welcome, and long overdue, emphasis on social and economic history, which are now mercifully free of the "subversive" connotations they carried in the 1930s and 1940s. A good example of these new directions is Yannis Koliopoulos's *Listes: I kentriki Ellada sta mesa ton 1900 aimu*, a fascinating study of brigandage and its political ramifications during the nineteenth century.

Curiously, no satisfactory one-volume history of Greece has yet been published in the country. But Apostolos Vakalopoulos, one of the ablest of the older generation of Greek historians, is engaged in writing a *History of Modern Hellenism (Istoria tou Neou Ellinismou)* on a monumental scale. This undertaking has now reached Volume Six (the first two volumes have been translated into English). The latest volume covers the crucial early years of the War of Independence and reflects the merits of earlier volumes in the series, namely a massive foundation of erudition and the refreshing absence of a conceptual framework. But despite the fact that the work takes over 1,000 pages to cover the years 1822–25, he still fails to provide a wholly convincing analysis of the internecine strife that accompanied the bitterly fought war against the Turks, just as the preceding, and almost equally massive, Volume Five, covering the years 1813

**THEODORE A. COULOUMBIS and JOHN O. IATRIDES (Editors)**  
*Greek American Relations: A Critical Review*  
264pp. New York: Pella Publishing Company.  
0 918618 17 7

**CHARLES C. MOSKOS, JR**  
*Greek Americans: Struggle and Success*  
162pp. Prentice-Hall.  
0 13 365098 7

**GILLIAN BOTTOMLEY**  
*After the Odyssey: A Study of Greek Australians*  
208pp. University of Queensland Press.  
0 7022 1399 3

to 1822, fails satisfactorily to explain exactly why the struggle for independence broke out when it did.

The curse of *progonopoleia* or ancestoritis weighs particularly heavily on Greece and the study of history in all too often been harnessed to a pursuit of the country's national claims. Not surprisingly, despite its intense and refreshing interest in the world about them, the generally of Greeks are often ignorant of their own recent history. Lately, however, there have been encouraging signs that the revolution which is transforming the academic study of Greece's modern history is beginning to filter down to the popular level. Recent years have seen the publication not only of some impressive school text-books but also of notable efforts in the field of popularization. The fifteen-volume *Istoria tou Ellinikou Ethnismou* (History of the Greek Nation), two volumes of which have been translated into English, is a case in point. Superbly illustrated, the volumes cover the history of Greece from prehistoric times until 1941 (significantly omitting the war and post-war periods). The volumes dealing with the modern period are uneven in quality but some, such as Volume Eleven, covering the period from 1669 to 1821, are first-rate examples of *houte vulgarisation*.

Greece is by no means unique as a country that has experienced problems in understanding and in coming to terms with its past. If much remains to be done, none the less over the past two or three decades Modern Greek historical studies have assumed the "take-off" stage of the development.

**MARC D. ANGEL**  
*The Jews of Rhodes: The History of a Sephardic Community*  
200pp. New York: Sepher-Hermon Press.  
0 87203 072 5

**YANNIS KOLIOPOULOS**  
*Listes: I kentriki Ellada sta mesa ton 1900 aimu*  
400pp. Athens: Ermis.

**APOSTOLOS E. VAKALOPOULOS**  
*Istoria tou Neou Ellinismou: I megali elliniki epinastasi (1821–1829): Volume 5. (I) proypotheseis kai o vaseis tis (1813–1822). 844pp.*  
Volume 6. I kentriki krisi (1822–1825). 1066pp.  
Thessaloniki.

## ART HISTORY

## Forms of luxuriance

David Freedberg

R. A. D'HULST

Jacob Jordaens  
Translated by P. S. Falla  
384pp, with 64 colour and 170 black-and-white illustrations. Sotheby Publications. £47.50.  
0 85667 119 3

Of the great trio of seventeenth-century Flemish artists, Jordaens remains the most inaccessible to modern taste. We pardon Rubens for occasional infelicities in drawing because of the evident success of pictorial effect; van Dyck's nervous refinement of handling seems peculiarly suited, subjects and sitters he portrays; but in the case of Jordaens it is difficult to find any of these qualities which so easily redeem his two more famous peers. We admire the first and the robustness of the third frequently seems to verge on the vulgar. It seems hard to find terms of praise and easy to be critical; and we forget precisely those criteria of energetic and lively action, vivid colour and luxuriant female flesh – beside which even the forms of Rubens appear restrained – that ensured the popularity of a painter who continued to enjoy extensive patronage for almost forty years after the deaths of Rubens and van Dyck. Where the three artists may be seen together, as in the Dominican Church of St Paul in Antwerp and in the Augustijnen, the superiority of Rubens is incontestable; van Dyck, for all his clumsiness in these works, demonstrates the extent of his ambition in the characteristically powerful modulation of lessons he had learnt from Rubens and as a result of his trip to Italy; but Jordaens, particularly in the "Martyrdom of St Apollonia" from St Augustine seems to overstep the bounds of tolerable decorum. The work embodies much of what we find troubling in him: an all too crowded scene, unnecessary and abundant foreshortening, frenetic gesturing (even the improbably mobile statue seems to gesticulate aimlessly), the oddly grotesque moment, and above all the blatant central action: in this case the simultaneous wrenching of the martyr's hair and the horrible extraction of her teeth.

In this new book on Jordaens – the first full-length study of the paintings since the monographs of Buschmann and Rooses of eighty years ago – the dozen of Jordaens studies remains alert to the shortcomings of the artist; indeed, there are moments of asperity, particularly when it comes to the stilted and often schematized late style. Not for D'Hulst an uncritical readiness to excuse the failings of the artist to whom

he has devoted the best part of a life; he is quite clear about what he does not like. This unsentimental attitude is refreshing, though as a historian he might have found space for a more positive evaluation of those qualities which for so long sustained Jordaens's position in both the local and the international market. The death of Rubens in 1640 and of van Dyck in 1641 allowed Jordaens (who had in any case always been a little cheaper than the other two) to capture an even larger share of both markets; but this fact alone cannot account for the allure and popularity of his work.

To a certain extent the answer is evident from the excellent body of illustrations which accompanies this book; and no one is in a better position than D'Hulst to provide a comprehensive survey of the great variety of subject matter that the artist produced. Jordaens painted a whole range of themes that were never attempted by either Rubens or van Dyck, above all the representation of Flemish proverbs and scenes from country life, idealized but still recognizably local. In this respect he provides the ethnographic link between Peter Bruegel the Elder and Jan Steen, the two most genial recorders of folk practices and habits on either side of the Maas.

Rubens in particular, but also van Dyck, undertook designs for tapestries; but Jordaens was unquestionably the premier Flemish tapestry designer of the century. In his compositions for this most expensive form of pictorial decoration, he produced charming representations of agricultural and rural life; he also

capitalized on the fashion for riding-school scenes, as well as treating a range of mythological and historical stories that are testimony to his inventiveness. As a result of his designs – done in a striking watercolour technique not used by either van Dyck or Rubens – Flemish tapestry-makers were to enjoy a brilliant renaissance, exporting sets through a tightly organized network of dealers whose records are unusually well preserved and which D'Hulst exploits to illuminating purposes here.

The representation of proverbs and popular fables begins at an early stage in Jordaens's career, notably with the story of the Peasant and the Magician, since he can blow both hot and cold – he blows on his hands to warm them, and on his soup to cool it; the Satyr is organized and takes flight at such wizardry. Then in the 1630s come the numerous variations on the theme of Twelfth Night ("The King Drinks", "As the Old Sing, so the Young Twitter" and so on). All these themes are frequently repeated – there can have been no shortage of customers for them – and we find them again in Jan Steen. In his twenties and thirties Jordaens painted a series of works, around a central idea of fertility and fruitfulness, in which the main female figures feature prominently and largely; it is as if he were here trying to outdo Rubens. These, however, were later to be dropped in favour of the more clearly grotesque subjects. Only occasionally in the later work, as in the Stockholm painting of King Canaules allowing his favourite Gyges to spy on the beauty of his wife (1646), does he

revert to the massive female forms of the earlier years.

The study of Jordaens, like that of Rubens, has not been free of controversy, sometimes acrimonious. But the present monograph may be taken as a definitive assessment of the present view of the paintings. It is not a *catalogue raisonné*; but D'Hulst is disarmingly candid about this, in both the pragmatic and the critical sense. He writes in his preface:

My original intention to make a complete *catalogue raisonné* has been carried out only in respect to [sic] his drawings (1974); as regards his other works, the task has proved too great, and must be taken over by younger scholars. The paintings produced in different versions by his studio assistants, and the later copies, are too numerous for me to list and describe with any approach to completeness. Moreover, the poor quality of many of these works has in a sense discouraged me from efforts which would, I believe, have been out of proportion to the value of the results.

The book presents a larger number of Jordaens's paintings than ever before; some, unfortunately, are left unillustrated, occasionally making the discussion difficult to follow. This is a pity, since D'Hulst is especially good on Jordaens's repeated use of the same studies in different works, and on the constant reutilization of motifs – and subjects – from earlier paintings. A clear picture of Jordaens's own approach to painting emerges, and the biographical information is satisfyingly full, especially with respect to his

Calvinist affiliation. This fact must remain central to any assessment of his secular themes, as well as some of the religious ones. One aspect of D'Hulst's analysis which seems weak is his persistent attempt to attribute moralizing meanings to mythological subjects. Although the attempt is clearly justified with many of the proverb and fable pictures, it is far less so with the classical ones. Influenced by the modern approach to interpreting Dutch genre paintings, D'Hulst constantly invokes the emblematic works of writers like Jacob Cats, and the allegorical renderings of Carel van Mander's oddly outdated *Commentary on Ovid's Metamorphoses*, almost every time he encounters a mythological subject. When it comes to the paintings of the Rape of Europa, for example, he suggests the following passage from van Mander as a *clavis interpretantis*:

Europa, seated on the bull's back, and gazing back towards land as she is carried out to sea, signifies the soul of man, which is carried by the body through the sea of this world's troubles, and she gazes fervently from afar towards the shore from which she came, that is to say God her Creator.

It is of course impossible to say that no contemporary viewer would have thought of this high-minded gloss on the story, but we may be fairly certain, from the abundant comparative evidence, that their appeal lay not in the evocation of any such complex significances, but in the lush nudes and marvellously painted cattle. Subjects like the Rape of Europa offered the opportunity to depict just such things.

Everything about Jordaens's art and personality suggests aims that are vastly removed from the slightly pretentious and by then old-fashioned moralistic reading of classical mythology provided by the learned van Mander. Jordaens's intentions and the response of most of his audience were based on a wholly different set of assumptions and attitudes. To the poses implied by the overly spiritualized interpretations of what we now, unachronistically, regard as earthly, never were there more robust scenes of Meleager and Atlanta, Metecury and Argus, Philemon and Baucis, Apollo and Marysas – but all of these D'Hulst proposes to subsume within the lofty moralizing mode fashionably taken from Cats and van Mander. For the rest, however, this book is a worthy successor to the four-volume *catalogue raisonné* of the drawings which D'Hulst published in 1974. It becomes the best modern introduction to the artist and by far the most complete treatment of his work. Neither Rubens nor van Dyck have received so comprehensive a survey of their art and lives, at least not since Evers's outdated monograph of over forty years ago.



St Peter's Church in Vienna, reproduced from *Das Alte Europa: Die hohe Kunst des Stadtvedute* by Harald Keller (286pp, with 220pp of engravings. Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt. 3 421 02586 X).

## Where the bora blows

Norman Stone

F. FÖLKEL and C. L. CERGOLY

*Trieste Provincia Imperiale: Splendore a tramonto del porto degli Asburgo*  
291pp. Milan: Bompiani, L18,000.

The *Karst*, or, in Italian, *Carso*, is a barren, mountainous region on the northern Adriatic. Its name is said to come from an old Celtic root, meaning "rock" (no doubt the same root gives us "Caernarfon"). The chief port, and city, of the *Karst* is Trieste. Its name was once a centre of nationalist disputes. Some people imagined that it was of Celtic origin; other people said, much more plausibly, that it came from the Slavonic word "trist", meaning "sad". The *Karst* (New York, Poland, or Trieste) in Valachia, in Roman times, the place was called "Tergetis". It is known for one of those vicious, depressing winds which, like the *Föhn* or the *Mistral*, is blamed for nervous troubles, and which causes examinations to be cancelled. Its name, *bora*, is clearly of Slavonic origin (*bura* is the Russian for "storm"). For Trieste was an Italian city, built on Slav land.

In that it resembled many of the Adriatic ports that were governed, directly or indirectly, by the Venetian empire. But with Trieste, there was a difference. It had reasonably good connections with Central Europe – the Jonzo led straight towards Austria and the lands of the Habsburgs, and even in the early fourteenth century, the people of Trieste accepted Austrian rule, so as to spite their Venetian rivals. The lordships of Trieste and Gradisca, and "the beprinoipalid:

county" (*gefürstete Grafschaft*) or Gorizia (or Görz) came at the end of the vast list of Habsburg titles.

In the eighteenth century, when the Habsburgs were consolidating their possessions, Trieste boomed. A road was constructed over the Semmering between Vienna and Trieste, and this was proclaimed a free port and thus like Leghorn in Tuscany, prospered because it broke the mercantile monopolies of other, decaying, Italian ports. It attracted immigrants who knew the Levant trade – Chiot or Dodecanese Greeks, the Scaramangas, Baldassis or Bajazoglus, whose descendants sometimes passed into the Austrian aristocracy. In the nineteenth century, in the age of steamships and railways, Trieste grew into a city of almost a quarter-of-a-million people. Amongst them, dependent in one way or another, on the foreign trade of the Habsburg Monarchy (James Joyce taught English in the local Berlitz for many years), the *Macchine* (insurance brokers); the *Rundschau* (Austrian and South Slav) huge building near the *Venezia* Quay; and Lloyd's Trieste, dominated Austrian business. The Trieste Jews, whose toleration Maria Theresa had encouraged, did well and became prominent in the city. The Vivante, Grassini of Callman Levi, Veneziani and Moravia families were among the *grandes dynasties bourgeois* of Trieste. As happened with *fin-de-siècle* Vienna, there came a peculiar cultural moment in Trieste, when members of well-to-do Jewish families, only two or three generations away from a ghetto that was hundreds of miles away, produced literature of a high order. Ivo Sesto (ie, the *Schiller* of *Zeno* fame) was the son of a Jewish father, and the author of the strange synthesis of the Jewish, Italian and the Jewish. As F. Fökel or married "out" as they prospered in

the 1870s and 1880s, and of course in the Italian world, which had absorbed Jews for centuries past, the consciousness of a separate Jewishness was much weaker than in the middle-European scene, where mass migration of Jews was much more recent. In Trieste, there were separate Ladino, Italian and German synagogues; some of the big Jewish families were sympathetic towards Italian nationalism (of which Emilio – formerly Salomone – Trevis was an early exponent) while others were straightforwardly *austriacante*, like the stiff Veneziani tribe into which Svevo married. It was mainly Jews and half-Jews who produced "Trieste 1900". Will anyone ever be able to write a book about all of this which says something serious?

This book, by two well-known Italian Trieste writers, one with a Germanic name (originally, he tells us, "Funkelstein") and the other with a vaguely Slav name, is an old-fashioned piece of writing: evocative and impressionistic, in a *belles-lettres* way reminiscent, in places, of Hermann Broch's *Hofmannsthal und seine Zeit*. Fökel contributes the longer of the two pieces, a mixture of history and evocation. There are some very good passages in this (the new Italy, in the 1870s, "si trovava a dover fronteggiare una situazione nuova con una monarchia valli-gia e una classe politica fra il provincialismo e il centralismo"). Fökel's picture of Trieste is well worth having, not least because he knew so many of the people he writes about (he even met Joyce, well everyone appears to have had some kind of Jewish connection, though I was often rather remote). The main Jewish families often converted to Christianity or married "out" as they prospered in

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## The charms of incrustation

Alastair Laing

Geoffrey Beard  
*Stucco and Decorative Plasterwork in Europe*  
224pp, with 165 illustrations, including 16 in colour. Thames and Hudson. £25.  
0 500 23361 6

A few years back, to celebrate the restoration of the Lansdowne Tower, photographs of the work in progress and of the craftsmen who carried it out were exhibited on the staircase. One of these, entitled simply "Plasterer", showed a grizzled and weather-beaten old man. Another, of a handsome youth with a winning smile, was – not inaptly, it seemed – captioned "Decorative Plasterer". The want of a less ambiguous appellation in English for the "decorators" of ornamental plasterwork is an indication of how marginal that art has been here, elsewhere in Europe, the Italian words *stucco* and *stuccatore* have been assimilated into the local language. It is true that *stucco* has been accepted into English; but confusingly it is

mostly used to refer to plain exterior composition, or "bastard stucco", whereas in every other language it is reserved for ornamental interior work. Geoffrey Beard has adopted the ugly hybrid, "stuccoista", for its practitioners, but having borrowed the straight Italian in one instance, why not then use "stuccador" in the other? What needs to be resisted, on the other hand, is the distinction implied by the title of the book under review and made in the first chapter (though it is not consistently adhered to throughout), between plasterwork and stucco, with pulverized marble as the essential ingredient of the latter. It is true that Vasari thought that this was the recovered secret of Antique stucco, that Thomas Clayton submitted the different estimates for working in the two media; but generally both terms were used indifferently without such precision, marble was less easily come by. The very word *stucco* antedates the Renaissance, and derives from the Lombard *stuhhi*, meaning "stucco" or "incrustation". The Lombard derivation is fitting, for it was above all the peripatetic inhabitants of the region around Lake Como, and the Comasque descendants of the *magistri*

who were to make the craft of stucco their own, and carry it to the furthest ends of Europe. Beard has long placed students of the English country house and its decoration in his debt; with a succession of publications tabling the results of his researches into *Decorative Plasterwork in Great Britain* (1975) and *Craftsmen and Interior Decoration in England 1660–1820* (1981). Would that all the results of his researches were published together, so that Beard on British craftsmen could take its place alongside Colvin's dictionary of architects, Gunn's of sculptors, and Croft-Murray's of decorative painters. *Decorative Plasterwork in Great Britain* has evidence of an admirably un-inular curiosity about the filiations abroad of foreign – and especially Comasque – stuccadores working in England, and it is this that has resulted in the present book. Unfortunately, as in the present book, it recognizes in his Beard's introduction, it is no easy thing to convince any publisher, whether here or abroad, of the marketability of a serious overall survey of stucco in Europe. It is no doubt partly because of this that the book, which is a masterpiece of clarity and exceptional sensibility, or "joyously displayed as part of exuberant settings

unequaled in Europe". What is lacking is any attempt to engage seriously with such questions as why stucco should have been predominantly an activity exported from rather than practised in Italy (save in subordinate locations such as side chapels, which receive no consideration here) or how much autonomy in the design of his ornament the stuccador possessed in each case (in South Germany, contrary to what Beard seems to assume, it was virtually a *tabula rasa* in ecclesiastical commissions). But the greatest failure is to have shared seriously attempting to bring cohesion and clarity to the subject: the pursuit and analysis of the work of particular septes, teams, or individual stuccadores from country to country and commission to commission, in order to chart the diffusion and evolution of particular vocabularies of ornament, or to have shown the working out of ornament, successive styles of ornament. The sample but unexplicated bibliography suggests that Beard intended a more thorough and serious book; the pity is that this one will prevent him or anyone else being asked to produce such a thing for years to come.







## The puddingy worm turns

Joanna Motion

SALLY BEATTIE

Annie's Story  
234pp. André Deutsch. £7.95.  
0 233 95276

Fifty and fat, active in daydreams but otherwise inert, Annie is bullied by her mother, who lies in bed yelling for kippers, cocoa and her daughter's company while she watches wrestling on television. The mother, once beautiful, still slim and lascivious, is now a faded, fat, and tractable even while sending her out to the bank to deposit a tin full of Monopoly money.

The knight errant who might rescue her from this domestic torment turns out to be very errant indeed: a dubious Gurkha colonel who wants to get his eyes and damp hands on Annie's cash – the real victory. Her mother manipulates life from the upstairs bedroom and the colonel prowls downstairs, acquisitively fingering the china. Annie skivvies between them.

Events had occurred and she had made no resistance. Colonel Carter had said they were engaged and she had made no real denial. He had kissed her cheek and squeezed her hand and she had accepted these pressures without protest. He had entered her house without invitation

and she had said nothing. She had given in to the strange man as she did to her mother, indeed as she did to everyone, but she did not know why.

Her compensations are dreams, mainly of the moderately happy past, and conversations with her late Uncle Arthur. Arthur isn't much help. He returns from beyond the ether to give a commentary of customized proverbs and jingles. "Blessed are the young in heart", he sings. "A hand in need is a hand indeed."

Annie's external life, in so far as she has one, takes place in an outpost of Barbara Pym territory: Wednesday is the coffee morning for redundant donkeys; Friday is the tractor-for-Uganda fête. Her one period of independent past existence – the recollection of which forms the middle section of the novel – centres on a local library. There Annie takes pleasure in stamping the date and shrinks from visiting late returners. The senior librarian, Miss Glossop, hoards a shelf of books which she wants no one to borrow (among them, *Cooking is the Cure*, for piles sufferers). Back at home, a flat in the vicarage, the vicar's wife cossets a collection of pornography which she is only too anxious to share. Annie walks guiltlessly between the two, holding hands with a regular borrower, Mr Klangsteiner, who hums her tuneless bits of Mozart and Beethoven.

Hummed at by Mr Klangsteiner

before his death, and by Uncle Arthur after his, nagged by her mother and self-appointed fiancee, Annie has little utterance of her own. What she does say and what she thinks often veer off at a whimsical tangent.

Sally Beattie takes a worthwhile risk in giving such importance to a character who is defined by her passivity. The novel's other figures hover on the edge of Annie's existence; they occasionally break through for a bout of triumphant intimidation but are muffled again by her capacity to turn them off. She doesn't even listen when she is being proposed to. Nor do her physical surroundings contribute much: the "dozy seaside town" where the book is set is anonymous and vague.

The danger, of course, is that Annie will appear as wet and exasperating as her mother finds her. Readers may want to cheer her on in her hostilities with the appalling colonel without seeking more of her company. She has an ambivalent effect, too, on the structure and tone of the narrative. The slipping patterns of her thoughts are reflected in its progress, which wanders into areas of archness and then out again into a patch of wit or some convincing portraiture. When Annie's victorious moment finally comes, in the liveliest scene in the book, the turning of the puddingy worm is welcome, but seems more willed than earned.

## Drifters

Lorna Sage

BILL BUFORD (Editor)

Granta 8: Dirty Realism  
New Writing from America  
252pp. Granta/Penguin. £3.50.  
0 1400 689 4

The contents list of a recent issue of the *National Geographic* went like this: The Universe, River Thames, Coal Country, Bronze Statues, Ferrets. Apart from the fact that "The Universe" came first and was printed in red letters, that was that: no mealy-mouthed editorial excuses for the Almighty's incoherence. I suspect that Bill Buford would envy such insouciance. As a result of its success with new writing, *Granta* is in some danger of losing out on the joy of juxtaposing this and that – of being obliged to finger trends, and of becoming nastily responsible for what's new. In the last issue the problem was postponed by the promotion of the "Best of Young British" (a random bunch if ever there was) but this time it's had to be faced. Which is doubtless why Mr Buford has gone out of his way to identify a kind of non-genre of the not-so-fresh: "Dirty Realism" from America. As he announces in a pleased-sounding editorial, "not heroic," not "postmodern," not "deconstructivist," "not a fiction devoted to making the large historical statement." He's hit on a vein of American short-story writing that has, as nearly as possible, nothing to do with the tradition of the new.

Some of the seven writers represented have been published in this country before, but they're all fairly unfamiliar names. We're invited to think of them as "the youth of the Sixties grown up" but unless most of them were chronically slow developers, that can hardly be the case. Rather, they seem to be – or at least to choose the voices of – people who missed out on the counter-cultural goodies (like, indeed, most people) and got them, packaged, later, as crass consumables. They come from West Virginia, Mississippi, Oregon, Kentucky, Alabama, and they write about a culture that would be working

class, except that it's drifting, mostly unemployed; and that much regional, except that it's too restful. Their characters are the sea of vague possibilities, a poor Bohemia where freedom has been emptied of meaning.

Most self-consciously "lost" are two youngest contributors, Bobbie Mason and Elizabeth Taylor. Ms Phillips's piece is a scary one about a doomed girl called Remy who is a telephone operator in a ghetto. "All of us were coming any physical geography, and Remy Mason's 'Still Life with Water Melon' and Frederick Barthelme's 'Mama Deal' who both ponder the weirdness of what people do for primitives, procure "hot" chickens. "Dirties" in the other sense (most dumbly disaffected purged of hope) are the stories Raymond Carver, Richard Ford, Tobias Wolff about disintegrating families in which parents are like as children.

Especially father – a recurrent theme is the old man's refusal to grant Tobias Wolff's narrator in "Barbaric Thief" says it succinctly:

My father worked at Conover's, Diego, went East for a while, Sikorsky, and finally came back to San Diego with a woman he had during some kind of medication nutrition seminar at a summer camp for adults.

The quietly exasperated tone is a you come to recognize. Grouping writers together, one suspects, and them seem individually as suggestive than they otherwise might be that is may. *Granta* and *Penguin*, this time at least, congratulate themselves on an interestingly trendy issue. There are, too, some pieces by Angela Carter on her lack for example, inaugurating a series of Dad by women, which she splendidly with the anthology Americans.

## Consuming couples

Carol Rumens

BOBBIE ANN MASON

Shiloh and Other Stories  
247pp. Chatto and Windus. £7.95.  
(paperback £3.95).  
0 7011 2718 X

These sixteen stories give the impression that the author knows her chosen territory – small-town Kentucky – to the last detail. Her observation of relationships is acute, but it is her use of the physical paraphernalia of her characters' lives that is most striking. Everyday objects and places are made to carry the resonance of symbols. The "Shiloh" of the title story, the Tennessee civil war battlefield, scattered now with "mishmash" and "plagues," symbolizes the failed marriage of the picknicking couple, Leroy and Norma Jean. (Even the homely Christian names have a certain associative weight that adds irony to the sense of destiny this ordinary couple embody).

Bobbie Ann Mason has a clear, uncluttered prose style than manages to avoid the faux-naïf. The stories are traditional in the sense that their self-consciousness is the role of a-seeing creator. Their modernity lies in the manner. Their technique resembles that of the mental patient in "A New Wave" (which takes black-and-white photographs of "fried eggs on cracked plates, an old-fashioned kitchen table, a bottle of tomato ketchup, a fence post, a rusted tractor seat sitting on a stump").

Fascinated by the domestic minutiae of social change, Mason often takes

marriage as her focal point, pays special attention to the ambivalence and uncertainties of the women. Norma Jean, for example, goes to classes in English composition and spends her evenings studying while Leroy, disabled and accident with his truck, makes money from craft-kits and a small building a full-size log cabin, a place which takes no account of his wife's more sophisticated expectations.

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## Tangling by gaslight

Savkar Altinel

GORDON WILLIAMS

Pomeroi  
232pp. Michael Joseph. £7.95.  
0 7181 2259 3

Forcibly taken to the White House one September evening in 1903 and told that something has come up which requires "a man who can lie, cheat, swindle and cardsharp John Stockley Pomeroi does not, as he might have been forgiven for doing, automatically assume that he is being made Secretary of State, but suspiciously asks what they want him to do. To that he will need to travel to London under diplomatic cover to find out what is going on at the American embassy there, and might just conceivably tangle with the formidable German spy-master Uwe Lang-Gaevernitz. He gets up to leave: politely reminded that his only alternative is to spend the next decade on a prison farm in Louisiana, he sits down again.

The reader who has got this far in Gordon Williams's new novel might find himself groaning. Williams is a talented if minor novelist and has produced a number of fine books, including one which was short-listed for the Booker Prize some years ago: he should, in other words, know better than to write an entertainment based on the tired Flashman formula, itself a legacy of the 1960s vogue for cowardly reading reveals that, the circumstances of his recruitment and the odd dirty trick he is called on to play in the course of his duties as a secret agent notwithstanding, Pomeroi is not exactly Flashman. He knows fear, but is not a poltroon. There is sex aplenty, with a strapping

American girl, with an English society widow, with a pretty hotel cashier who turns out to be a British Intelligence plant, but in the end what drives him is love. And, although concerned primarily to look after his own interests, he also has a conscience. In fact, he has too much of a conscience: he is constantly employed to voice a certain distaste for England and English "hypocrisy", which, taken together with frequent references to Scottish accents as "cute", argues Celtic origins on the part of his author.

Just as *Pomeroi* more or less avoids being a cut-price Flashman adventure, it also more or less avoids being the gaslit Edwardian thriller. There are a few nods in the direction of period detail: Marconi and Churchill make guest appearances but ultimately it is not second-hand history but the rendering of direct experiences and impressions – an ocean liner cutting through the darkness in mid-Atlantic; docking in Liverpool in the rain; the English countryside seen for the first time through train windows; London, dark and grey at two o'clock in the afternoon; prostitutes calling from doorways in Haymarket – that takes precedence.

While Williams certainly has an eye, he has something of a tin ear. Neither his American characters ("Is it true, Cousin Pomeroi, in Alaska if you walk a stream outdoors your urine freezes all the way back up and when you walk away your wee-wee breaks off?") nor his upper-class English ones ("Vulgarity comes easily to you bloody Americans") sound right. Nor, for that matter, does "Opin guv, always bobbee" strike one as a convincing Cockney version of "Hop in, governor." In all, *Pomeroi* is a somewhat uneven performance, which has the air of being the "pilot" for a whole series of Pomeroi books, and the author would be well advised to proceed with caution.

## Very adjacent

Gavin Ewart

RICHARD DIGANCE

Run Out In The Country  
203pp. Macmillan. £7.95.  
0 333 35277 7

Even the most illiterate and stupid novels have their compensations: indeed illiteracy and stupidity can be entertaining to the Olympian critic, while even writers who fancy themselves can have their lapses. Cricket novels, though, are a category on their own. If you're the sort of person who couldn't tell a Chinaman from a Japanese umpire, you would be well advised not to read this one.

Cricket imagery is fundamental to its descriptive passages. Of a snow scene Richard Digance writes: "The thatched cottages of the village were as white as a night-sheen." One character is described as "an elongated sky-bound Derek Underwood on stilts". Others have no name but are "medium-paced bowlers" or "middle-order batsmen" (just as for Mr. Mulliner and P. G. Wodehouse they were Milds or Ginn-and-Tonics). One has a dog called Stumper. Ordinary journalistic cliché has a look-in too ("defused the situation"), along with socialism ("gratuitous was minimal"). One promising comic expedient is the transfer of epithets: "as soon as his pin-striped head hit the pillow" another refers to brand identification: "pulling his notes from beneath an Old Spiced Amp".

This crude, good-natured comic fantasy about a village team playing one from London, reads like a simple Victorian school story, the male equivalent of the romantic novel, written partly in Commentator's English ("deliveries" for "balls" and LBW those things "very adjacent"), partly in enthusiastic, sanguine schoolboyese ("his shoulders broadened and he was on his way" "the damaging demon Baird was on his

## Right speaking, wrong reading

H. R. Woudhuysen

A. LEIGH DENZEE

Spenser and the Motives of Metaphor  
196pp. Duke University Press.  
\$31.75.  
0 8223 0487 2

PATRICK CULLEN and THOMAS P. ROCHE (Editors)  
Spenser Studies: A Renaissance Poem Annual, III  
198pp. University of Pittsburgh Press. \$21.50.  
0 8229 3457 4

Spenser, who was once the poets' poet, has now become the academics' poet and exclusive preserve. You don't actually have to like or enjoy the poems much in order to write about them. Even reading Spenser is not so necessary, nor immediately pressing, when faced with the stream of what presents itself as commentary, criticism and exposition, issuing relentlessly from journals and university presses.

A. Leigh Denzée's *Spenser and the Motives of Metaphor* uses Sidney's *A Defence of Poetry* to establish that Spenser had "to prove his own claims of right speaking and to guard his texts against the threat of wrong readings by making the metaphoric nature of the poems constant and central focus." Where Sidney's essay is witty and lightly handled Denzée's elaborate critical machinery constantly hampers him. His commentary is frequently pedestrian, producing statements such as: "If, that is, poetry is an art of verbalizing abstract nouns, it is also an occasion for nominalizing concrete verbs"; and he delights in tiresome verbal play, which is presumably meant to be elegant as well as incisive: "unlike the Garden, which has a pre-text, the Bower is a pretext".

His survey divides into two almost equal parts, beginning with *The Shepherds Calendar*, which he populates with "wrong-reading and laudifinding shepherds", but he pays little attention to the work's woodcuts or its political and religious allegories. He passes on to "The Ruins of Time" in which Verulamius is "both false poet and false reader" and establishes some interesting links between *Colin Clouts Come Home Again* and *Daphniaida*. In the *Annals*, he argues, Spenser is once again critical of the poetic persona's voice, while Denzée concludes a rather brief and rushed chapter on *The Fowre Hymnes* asserting that they are Spenser's "most optimistic poetic effort". Most of the book's second half is taken up with a laborious account of the poetic strategies employed in each of the poems to the six books of *The Faerie Queene*. Some useful work with concordance has been done in tracing Spenser's handling of the word "rede" in the poem and the book's final chapter shows how the quest for Cupid in Book III resolves itself into the discovery of Amoret.

*Spenser and the Motives of Metaphor* is a dull book. Much of what it says in such a heavy-handed way is obvious. Much is unconvincing and arguable. Almost by default its criticism sends the reader back to the poems rather than continue with Denzée's tired prose. His book has the feel of inevitability about it, that given enough weight and impetus he will manage to mould the poet (or at least enough of him, for he does not discuss *Prothalamion*, nor most of the *Complaints*) into his desired book-length shape.

There is a similar feeling of inevitability about the third volume of *Spenser Studies*. It is slightly shorter than the last one (reviewed in the TLS, June 18, 1982), but maintains its North

American, numerological bias, and promises to be a permanent feature on the landscape of Renaissance poetry studies; whether it offers pastoral beauty or urban blight still remains to be seen – just. For once again, there is no sense of urgency, coherence or direction among the essays and only about half of the volume is devoted to Spenser himself. Seth Weiner goes over the Spenser-Harvey discussion of English verse in classical metres again (ground already carefully surveyed in Derek Attridge's excellent *Well-Weighed Syllables*), finishing with a complex numerological analysis of Campion's "Rose-cheeked Lawra" (his piece is exactly the same length (an apt coincidence) as Thomas P. Roche's reading of Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella*, which, arguing that we are meant to disapprove of, and learn from, Astrophil's behaviour, is not as "radical" as its author would like to suggest. He too ends with a suggestive numerological account of the sequence's structure, in which he pays special attention to the placing of the songs.

These two pieces take up more than half the book, not leaving much room for the other articles, which tend to be short and scholarly, like H. L. Weatherly's on Chrysostom and *The Faerie Queene*, but not altogether convincing and often unilluminating. Similarities are sought between the *Georgics* and Spenser's epic, Queen Elizabeth is found to be behind the Temple of Isis and Mercuria's palace, and Sidney's *Musae*; Spenser's *A View of the Present State of Ireland* is closely examined for rather obscure purposes, and *Romeo and Juliet* is related to Shakespeare's view of Roman politics. Finally, John Hollander in some "postprandial remarks" looks at Spenser's influence on Hawthorne in his story "A Select Party". Although it is the slightest piece in the volume at least it makes one want to go and read the story for oneself.

## Occupied and preoccupied

Gabriel Josipovici

JOSEF SKVORECKÝ

The Swell Season  
226pp. Chatto and Windus. £7.95.  
(paperback £3.95).  
0 7011 2673 6

A kind reader might describe Josef Skvorecký thus: Here is a writer who deals with the tragedies that have befallen Czechoslovakia from 1937 to the present day and yet who manages to be neither solemn nor pompous, but on the contrary, ironical, witty and oblique. His hero – for it is the same young man who appears in all his fiction, whether, like Danny, the hero of this collection of interlinked stories, he is still at school, or, like the hero of *Miss Silver's Past*, he works for a government cultural agency – his hero is a young man with only two things on his mind: women and jazz.

He chats up the girls and thinks himself irresistible, but just when he imagines they are finally going to succumb to his charms he finds they have once again led him up the garden-path. If girls let you down though, jazz never does. The only trouble is that if it comes to a straight choice between

them it's the mouth-watering, tantalizing, fickle girls who win every time. This young man is vain, lascivious, a bit of a liar, not above betraying his friends where women are concerned, unintellectual and unathletic. But he plays jazz well, his heart is in the right place, and he is no fool. In comparison with him it is the others who come to seem flawed, if not actually evil, concerned as they are to save their skins, rise in the system, and generally betray by their actions the values they believe in. Thus beneath the bright surface we are really being presented with the anatomy of a society under occupation, first, as in this volume, the German occupation, and then, in the novels, the Russian one. Skvorecký's hero is none other than a Czech Lucky Jim, and Skvorecký is as serious a moralist as Amis.

A less kindly reader would see in these books nothing but a trivialization of serious issues. These stories, he would argue, work perfectly well at the level of light comedy with sex as its principal theme, but that is all. Danny may give up the chance of a walk in the woods with a beautiful girl in order to spend the night helping the local priest rewrite the parish register, so as to conceal the fact that he has fiddled with it to help out a couple he has married illegally, since the girl is Jewish; but the

final effect is not to show the interconnection of tragedy and comedy, death and sex. The author wants to persuade us that he is looking unselfishly at life, that schoolboys will naturally go on chasing skirts while Jews are being deported; but the effect we are left with is that neither hero nor author really cares that much about Germans, Jews or deportations. Or rather, the author may care, but the writing is so consistently concerned with the effect of pretty girls on sex-starved youths that everything else remains insubstantial. Similarly when, in the last story, the jazz-playing hero, whenever he leaves the platform in the course of a concert, keeps overhearing one of his schoolmates haranguing another about the virtues of the socialism to come, one can see the effect the author is trying to achieve, but these moments seem artificial, stuck on to a story about something completely different. The German throughout are presented as cardboard figures, self-satisfied fools who are easily outwitted, as the Communists are in Skvorecký's novels. Thus, instead of feeling elated by the sharp realism of these pieces one feels depressed by the clever and sophisticated use of a well-tried formula, endlessly repeated.

This reader inclines towards the second view.

## Health and efficiency

Jill Neville

JOHN MCGILVER

274pp. Hodder and Stoughton. £7.95.  
0 340 32015 2

Let joy be unconfined. But human beings can bear very little joy, especially in others. That is the obstacle Utopias stumble over. James McIlver, a New Zealand writer of note, tracks the apocryphal of one such noble madman who turns up in an obscure corner of New Zealand, having lost his family in the concentration camps.

The German Jewish survivor, once Dr Falk, proceeds to reorganize the impoverished, slack community into a very heaven. The Antipodes are full of such escapees: most of them bury themselves in Nature, less red in tooth and claw, they feel, than civilization.

The doctor has to cut through petty rules and restrictions to achieve his

Utopia; a magistrate is sent to investigate. As this small, sweetly, not unsympathetic character, broken on the wheel of anxiety and asthma, plods through the village, the townsfolk are untold.

It is that kindness that makes the first part, at least, funny. Going to the confusion of the magistrate, he communicated all too exactly to the reader. It seems that Dr Falk has created a wonderfully efficient health service in the area, with a series of clinics, testing devices, as lay doctors, almost obliterating infant mortality among Maoris. But his commendable zeal for hauling people out of the mire doesn't stop at such practical matters.

A girl with "marvellous nipples" turns up from his Solomon Islands in a boat. "She arrived, leaning a wooden log against the steps of a frigate bird, her hair like a tangled flower in her hair." This is the stuff of which erotic fantasies are made, and the good doctor marries her; but he also sends her out to cure the sexual impotence of the yokels. After she dies, the magistrate discovers that Dr Falk did not bury her in the legal manner and

attempts to pin down this towering idealist with his paperclips.

The locals give conflicting evidence. But the doctor is eventually brought down by a local woman, Gail, who has been smouldering for years, and puts her original husband up to burning down Falk's dispensary and brings back the dormant evil in the locals. Here a bucolic comedy suddenly becomes a scathing parable of What Human beings are capable Of. Part of the doctor's irritating saintliness is his disinclination to take revenge after the manner of the village Goliath, even allowing the village Goliath to visit him in order to defuse her jealousy.

As a blueprint of what could be achieved if we weren't all so hopeless, McIlver's writing is at best, but has been printed too much. It still lacks the elusive clarity of successful comic irony.

A paperback edition of David McIlver's *The Making of a Madman* (reviewed in the TLS of July 29) will be available from Methuen in September at £5.95.

## Rewriting Virgil

Sarah Wintle

ANDREW FICHTER

Poets Historical: Dynastic Epic in the Renaissance  
237pp. Yale University Press. £17.50.  
0 300 02721 4

This book studies those Renaissance poems by Ariosto, Tasso and Spenser which celebrate the origins and subsequent successes of a noble house or nation. Such poems have imperial historical and prophetic narrative strategies have their own origins in a reading of Virgil's *Aeneid*. Andrew Fichter doesn't mention T.S. Eliot, but his argument is related to that put forward by that old Christian Virgilian imperialist in his 1951 talk "Virgil and the Christian World". Like Eliot, Fichter argues that Virgil's high conception of the *imperium romanum* was seen as insufficient by his Christian imitators because it involved no sense of the supreme virtue of love.

For Eliot it was Dante who most notably repaired this insufficiency; Fichter takes a different line and argues that his chosen poets read Virgil with the eyes of St Augustine, with an outline of his argument is set out with exemplary clarity in a preliminary chapter, and then substantiated by

close readings of the *Aeneid* and of Augustine's *Confessions*, as well as by chapters on the three Renaissance long poems, examining in particular the treatment of history. Behind the thrust of Roman destiny in the *Aeneid*, it is argued, lies a certain heroic inconclusiveness, and the narrative of a grimly cyclical view of history. Fichter quotes Auden's "Secondary Epic":

Wouldn't Aeneas have asked: "What next? After this triumph, what portends?"

The later poets were able to convert the implicit melancholy and uncertainty of the Virgilian vision into a sure knowledge that the triumph of their chosen dynasties was an image of the Christian apocalypse. Thus the Virgilian opposition between Rome and Carthage is transformed into a set of variations on the Augustinian topic of the two cities, and the opposition between love and duty, into that between *cupido* and *charitas*.

However, as Augustine admits of no form of dualism, "there is finally but one order of being: to Augustinian metaphysics – conflict in the historical epic is in the end illusory; it is only misperception and misconception of the eye of the imperfectly enlightened beholder." The literary focus shifts to the hero's quest for enlightenment, and to an added emphasis on dynastic marriage through the triumph of love.

The Renaissance poets accept Christian doctrine's requirement of a drastic reassessment of the norms of classical epic and reconfigure nevertheless to proclaim themselves "Virgil's literary heirs".

Fichter's chapters on the way in which this dialogue between generic and doctrinal demands works itself out in the texts under consideration vary in comprehensiveness and insight, although there are telling details observed all the way through.

The chapter on Augustine illustrates the ways in which Augustine assimilated the *Aeneid* into the relation of his own life. Geographical coincidences – the journey from Carthage to Rome – helped of course,

but the book shows how Augustine exploited this coincidence to make his *Confessions* in part a rewriting of the story of Aeneas, and more particularly of the story of Aeneas's relationship with the understanding of his own destiny. This is the most interesting and detailed chapter in the book.

Renaissance dynastic epic is altogether a more fluid and complex kind of writing and Fichter's particular perspective means on occasion a certain over-simplification and a missing out of what is most enjoyably characteristic of each author. The *Orlando Furioso*'s vital enjoyment of its large romance element, for example is tied up rather too neatly, and parcelled up with what Fichter sees as the poem's Augustinian Virgilian inheritance.

We find ourselves speaking of two plots dramatizing the effects of two divergent accounts of love, one that proves self-destructive and one upon which an empire can be built. Fichter proceeds to read the doomed Orlando's story as "an intricate pattern of Ariostean inversions of the Virgilian text". This case is substantiated but never fully related to Ariosto's extraordinarily complicated and elusive attitude to the life and the lives he portrays.

Spenser, wayward and hugely expansive, is less accommodating to Fichter's approach, which looks particularly at Britomart and Artegall, in whose story the epic themes of history, justice, love and dynastic marriage are examined. There are some perceptive remarks about ways in which "Spenser's narrative perpetually approaches but never closes with history", but nevertheless the Virgilian material is spread too thinly in Spenser's method requires to be accumulated – and Fichter's method requires to be accumulated – and Fichter's method requires to be accumulated.

The chapter on Milton, who was no supporter of dynastic imperialism, but certainly a deliberate re-writer of the ways in which Augustine assimilated the *Aeneid* into the relation of his own life. Geographical coincidences – the journey from Carthage to Rome – helped of course,

## Riverside Drive

All day the river flows past the living room mirror. We dip in and out breathing normally. During dinner the sun glazes behind the mirror. Later, we clean the table. The river runs to black. First light – the living room mirror wakes the adolescent river.

Alice Kavounas